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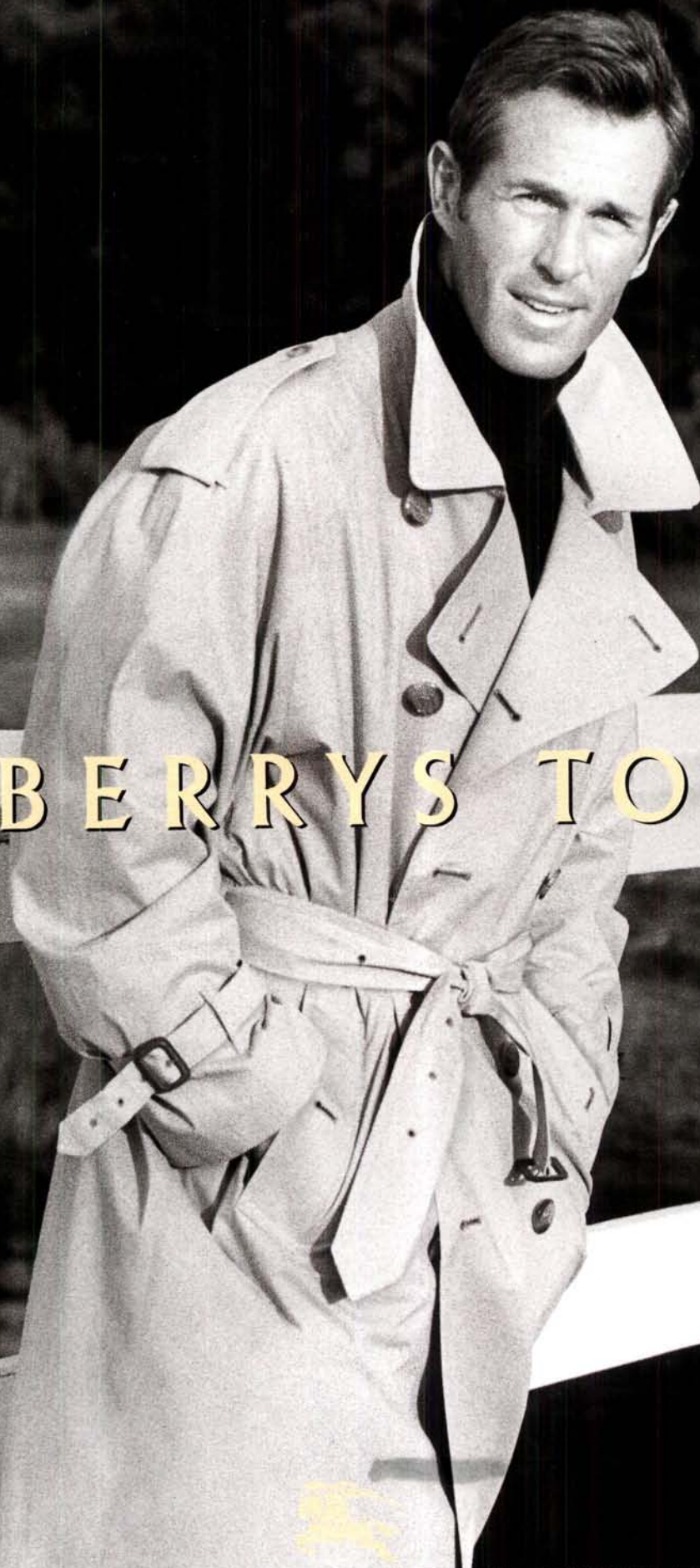
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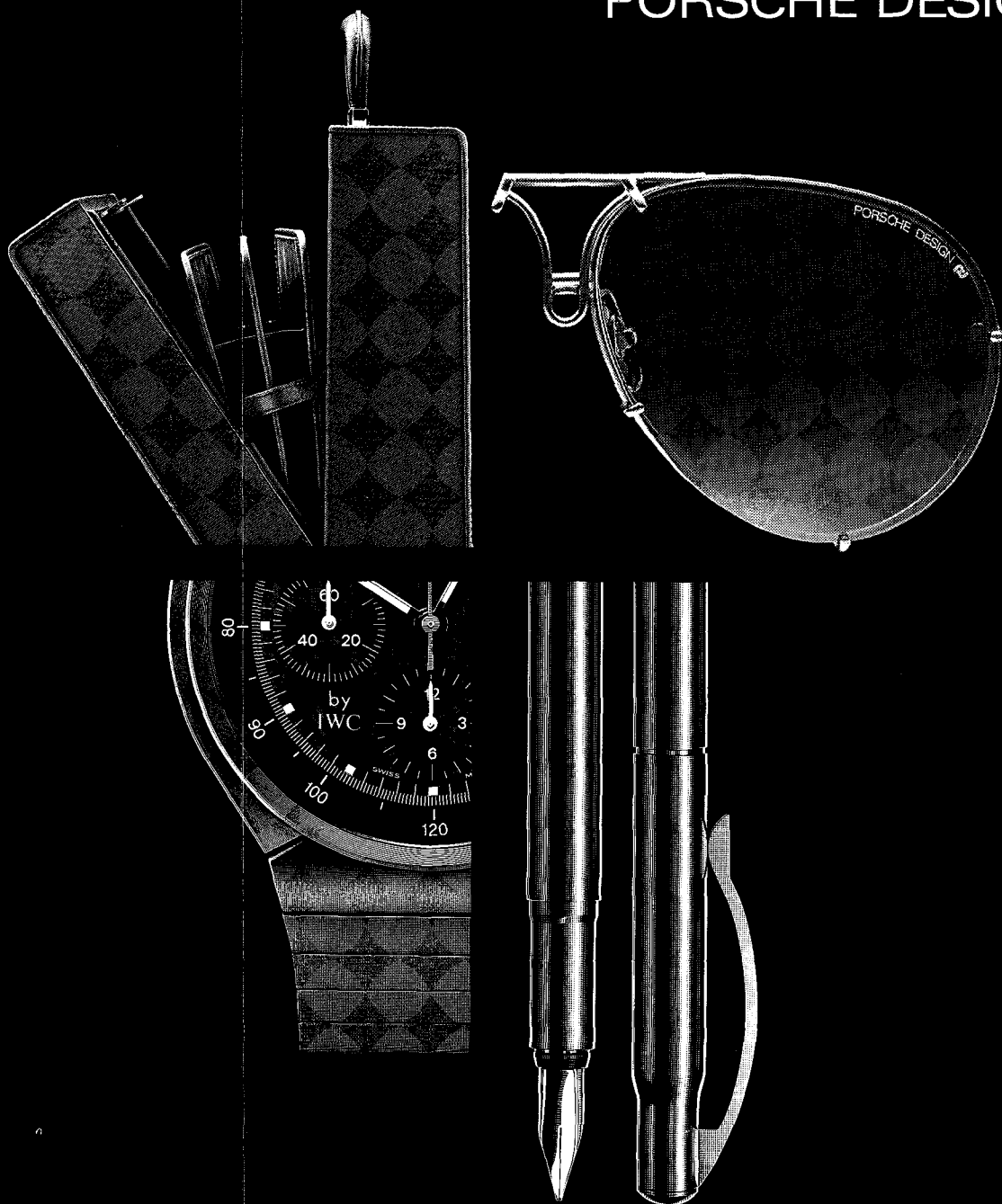


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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

AT home, in Wichita, Gina Austin-Fresh often feels removed from the center of things. At such times, she reminds herself that she's a creative force in New York theatre. Gina was recently in town to see two former drama students from Wichita West High School perform: Karla Burns, who just finished playing Nell in "The Comedy of Errors," in Central Park, and Ray Wills, who is making his Broadway debut as Vronsky's sidekick in "Anna Karenina," at Circle in the Square. After a matinee of Ray's show, we sat down with Ray and Gina at the Art Café, on Broadway.

When Ray tells people that his high-school drama coach is in town for his debut, they ask if they can do anything to help her get around. But Gina, who is forty-five, looks more like Ray's contemporary than like his mentor. Together, they sound like a somewhat frazzled comedy team. Ray is thirteen years Gina's junior, but he says that the age difference has dwindled over the years. "At this point, I wonder if I'm not older than Gina," he says. "She's aged better than I have."

"Ray just thinks he peaked back in Kansas," Gina says. "He thinks all his great moments are behind him."

"I was very big in Wichita," Ray agrees. "Even now, if you say my name there, people know just who you mean."

"Ray was always big," Gina says, nodding. "Even in high school, he let me know that Wichita couldn't contain him—that he belonged back East, and that he would make Broadway."

A few months ago, Ray called Gina to tell her the moment was at hand. She went out and bought a black off-the-shoulder pants outfit. (If the debut hadn't come off, Gina told us, that outfit would have taunted Ray in his obscurity. It would have grown faded and forlorn.) After Gina bought the outfit, she didn't have enough money left for a plane ticket.

"Fortunately, people in Kansas are nostalgic," she says. "I was able to sell my old Barbie doll for a mess of money and buy a ticket in time to wear the pants suit on opening night."

We ask Ray to tell us the most useful lesson he has learned over the years from his drama coach. He looks at Gina for a moment, then says, "The value of an old Barbie doll."

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)
BROTHER TRUCKERS—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company launches its new season with this comedy by Georg Osterman. In previews. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

CUT THE RIBBONS—A new musical, which features Georgia Engel, Barbara Feldon, and Donna McKechnie. The score is by Cheryl Hardwick and Mildred Kayden, and the lyrics are by Mae Richard. In previews. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE COMPANY—Presenting two one-man shows in rotating rep: *JOYICITY*, based

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on the writings of James Joyce, and **FRANKLY BRENDAN**, taken from the works of Brendan Behan and Frank O'Connor. Vincent and Chris O'Neill, two Dublin-born brothers, are the actors. "Joyicity" has a preview Sept. 8 at 8 and opens Sept. 9 at 8. "Frankly Brendan" has a preview Sept. 12 at 3 and opens that night at 8. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN—Joanne Camp is Josie Hogan in this production of Eugene O'Neill's play. Previews begin Sept. 9. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

THE ROADS TO HOME—Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote, and Rochelle Oliver star in a play written and directed by Horton Foote. Previews begin Sept. 11. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

YOSHITSUNE—A Samurai drama, performed by Suo Sarumawashi, the Japanese troupe of macaque monkeys and actors. The setting has been changed from medieval Japan to the American Civil War for this production, and there is English, as well as Japanese, narration. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Sept. 11 at 8 and Sept. 12 at 3 and 8.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ANNA KARENINA—This Classics Illustrated version is pretty much what you'd expect from a couple of jingle writers—Peter Kellogg (book and lyrics) and Daniel Levine (score)—trying to adapt Tolstoy for the musical stage. Forced into a Broadway mold, Anna and Vronsky become victims of formula rather than society—two shallow and vulgar people caught in the most banal of clichés—while Kitty and Levin, stripped of their complexities, become a flirt and a buffoon. The main performances—by Ann Crumb, Scott Wentworth, Gregg Edelman, and Jerry Lanning—are a marvel, under the circumstances. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

THE BEST OF FORBIDDEN BROADWAY—This tenth-anniversary edition of Gerard Alessandrini's long-running, ever-fluctuating musical revue is, as one might expect, a treat. There is some new material, but our favorite sequences are still the spoof of "M. Butterfly" and the "Speed-the-Plow" number, "Madonna's



*J. Smith-Cameron, David Healy,
Patricia Conolly, Jeff Weiss,
and Simon Jones
in Tom Stoppard's
"The Fifteen Minute Hamlet"*

Brain," in which David Mamet and Ron Silver try to teach Madonna to act and she ends up tearing off most of her clothes. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/4/92.) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

CONVERSATIONS WITH MY FATHER—If you're looking for a totally satisfying theatrical experience, try the new Herb Gardner, a bitter-sweet memory play about a Lower East Side barkeep, his two sons, and the patrons of his tavern. As staged by Daniel Sullivan, with an ace cast led by the wonderful Judd Hirsch, the play does what "Jake's Women" and "Dancing at Lughnasa" would probably do if their authors were, respectively, more sophisticated and less sentimental. Grab this one. (4/13/92) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

CRAZY FOR YOU—Loosely based on "Girl Crazy," which opened in 1930, this glorious show is actually a celebration of the music of George Gershwin and the lyrics of his brother Ira—nineteen songs in all—and also of the witty, imaginative choreography of Susan Stroman. Ken Ludwig wrote the lively book. Harry Groener and Jodi Benson are the lead actor/dancers. The scenery is by Robin Wagner; the costumes are by William Ivey Long; and the masterly direction is by Mike Ockrent. Bless 'em all. (3/2/92) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

DISTANT FIRES—A play by Kevin Heelan, which was seen last season at the Atlantic Theatre. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

FALSETTOS—This back-to-back revival of "March of the Falsettos" and "Falsettoland," two of William Finn's three one-act musicals about a childish, self-absorbed man who leaves his wife and son for his not very nice male lover, is strictly for those who care. We've never understood the appeal of Mr. Finn's trilogy. It has a chronology as complicated as the Oedipus cycle and a dramatic sensibility akin to that of the Oresteia. To us, though, it has always seemed like banality set to music: shallow, unlikeable people expressing themselves in shallow, unlikeable songs. (5/11/92) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE—The guys are black dancers and singers of ability and spirit, who perform the songs (either lyrics or music or both) of the late Louis Jordan, among them "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying," "Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" This London import makes a merry evening. (4/20/92) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

GUYS AND DOLLS—A lively production of Frank Loesser's perfect musical, under the direction of Jerry Zaks. Nathan Lane and Faith Prince are the leading guy and doll, and Tony Walton designed the stunning scenery. (4/27/92) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

JAKE'S WOMEN—Alan Alda is at his genial best in the new Neil Simon. The play, about an aging writer trying to come to terms with the women in his life, past and present, is pretty much what you'd expect: some funny lines and a lot of phony dialogue. It's predictable, banal, and contrived, but at least it showcases a fine cast of actresses that includes Kate Burton and Joyce Van Patten. (4/6/92) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

JELLY'S LAST JAM—The music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, at the same time, an unsparing delineation of Morton himself. The show, an original if ever there was one, was written and directed by George C. Wolfe. In the starring role, Gregory Hines combines his astonishing talents as tap dancer and actor; Savion Glover, who plays the character as a young man, is worthy of him, which is saying a lot. Also present are Keith David, Tonya Pinkins, Wayne Mathis, and Mary Bond Davis. Luther Henderson has adapted Morton's music and offered some music of his own; the lyrics were written by Susan Birkenhead; and Hope Clark was the choreographer. (5/11/92) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

LOTTO (EXPERIENCE THE DREAM)—A comedy by Cliff Roquemore. Performances resume Sept. 9. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-9251.)

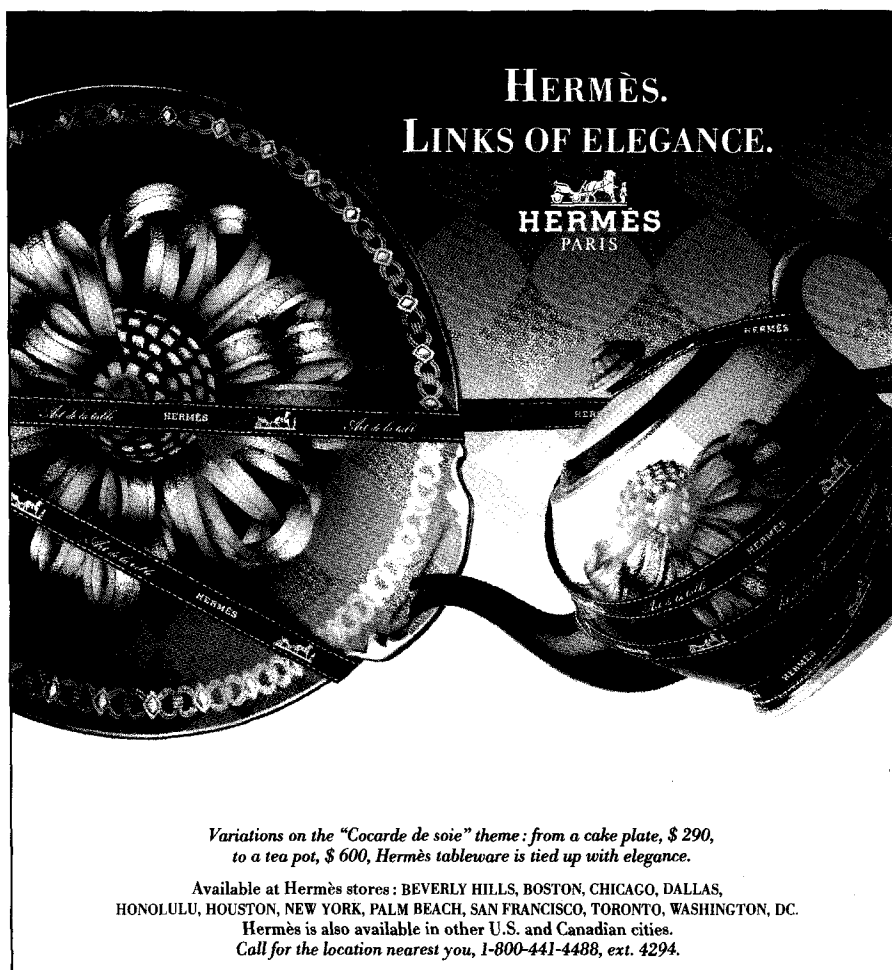
THE NIGHT LARRY KRAMER KISSED ME—A play written and performed by David Drake. (Ferry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND and THE FIFTEEN MINUTE HAMLET—Tom Stoppard has made parody an art form in "The Real Inspector Hound," a play about a pair of drama critics who attend and appraise a performance of a traditional, worn-out British thriller. The jokes come thick and fast, and the result is Christmas morning for connoisseurs of comedy. The Roundabout's production, under Gloria Muzio's direction, is very good; Simon Jones and David Healy are first-rate in the leading roles, and they are admirably supported by Patricia Conolly, J. Smith-Cameron, Jane Summerhays, and Jeff Weiss, among others. "The Fifteen Minute Hamlet," performed as a prologue, is exactly what it sounds like—a breakneck anthology of Gems From. Same director, same company, many laughs. (8/31/92) (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

RUTHLESS!—This camp musical about a monster child star is harmless and amusing enough—assuming you can stomach the little girl. She gave us the pip. (Players, 115 Macdougall St. 254-5076.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: A comedy by James Sherman. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.) ... **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) ... **CATSKILLS ON BROADWAY:** A festival of ethnicity and all but unbroken laughter. Freddie Roman and Mal Z. Lawrence are the Jewish comedians; Dick Capri handles the Italians; and Louise DuArt does impressions. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.) ... **DANCING AT LUGHNASSA:** How you respond to Brian Friel's wistful autobiographical play depends a good deal on your personality and preoccupations. Either you will find it lovely and lyrical or it will strike you as the memory play from Hell. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) ... **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run celebrated its thirty-second birthday last May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) ... **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.) ... **LOST IN YONKERS:** This family melodrama by Neil Simon, set in Yonkers during the Second World War, is about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.) ... **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hershey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) ... **MISS SAIGON:** Oh, the horror! The horror! (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) ... **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) ... **THE SECRET GARDEN:** This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) ... **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** The never-ending nuptials of Anthony Angelo Nunzio and Valentina Lynne Vitale. With audience participation, as you probably know. (St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.) ... **TUBES:** A performance work by Blue Man Group about art and other matters. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.) ... **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. With Mac Davis. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)



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DANCE

ROBERT GRESKOVIC, the dance critic, lives in Brooklyn, near Pratt Institute, where he trained in painting, drawing, and sculpture. He has written on theatrical dancing—mostly in New York—since 1972, and has published his work in general-interest periodicals (like the *Village Voice*) as well as specialty ones (like *The New Dance Review*, of which he is an associate editor). He estimates that since 1977 he has attended seven performances a week almost year-round. When he says, "I know dance when I see it, and I know when I don't see it," his voice has the ring of authority.

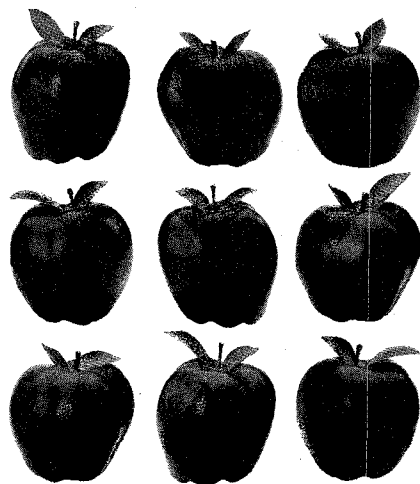
Questions like "What is dance?" are not solely theoretical for Mr. Greskovic; as a member of the panel of judges for the Bessies—the New York dance and performance awards that are closely associated with downtown events—he is often called on to make distinctions between dance and performance art. The ninth annual Bessie-awards ceremony will take place on September 9, at the Delacorte, and with that in mind we recently asked Mr. Greskovic to speak about the contemporary downtown scene. His report was sobering. "I think it's a non-dance scene now," he said. "There's no focus. Choreographers are coming out of groups formed by self-styled performers who get to perform

because they know the producers. After all, to call yourself a performer-choreographer takes a lot less back-ground in dance than to call yourself a dancer-choreographer. Not everyone agrees on this, though. I can't tell you the number of times I've had to say, at Bessie meetings, that I think something isn't dancing but, rather, acrobatics, performance, or acting. Dancing has a formal rigor completely removed from other elements."

Mr. Greskovic has always considered himself a classicist. He came to dancing through classical ballet—Balanchine, Fonteyn, and Nureyev—but when he calls himself a classicist now he is not referring to any specific technique. "There are people who practice classical ballet who are not classicists," he said. "And there are people who don't practice classical ballet who are. I believe that David Gordon, for instance, is a classicist."

What does classicism mean to him, then? "Balance," he said. "Stability, sanity, a center. I love people who pull away from that center teasingly, or dangerously—with as much risk as possible." He paused, and added, "But without denying what they strain against. To paraphrase Balanchine, you only go away from something to come back."

MALASHOCK DANCE & COMPANY—A San Diego-based company in a program called "Apologies from the Lower Deck." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Sept. 10-12 at 8.)



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NIGHT LIFE

THE Black Crowes look as if they've been plucked from a time capsule buried about twenty years ago. Chris Robinson, the group's snake-hipped, sallow-complexioned lead singer, belts like Rod Stewart, struts like Mick Jagger, and seems to believe that pot is the wonder drug of the nineties. Except for the group's clean-cut, polo-shirted drummer, they come across as completely unreconstructed, from their long, unkempt hair to their tight, flared trousers to the bottle of Jack Daniels perched on a stack of Marshall amplifiers. Watching the group at a recent Beacon Theatre concert, you could have easily imagined you were at Altamont.

The Crowes have surpassed everyone's expectations. Their debut album, "Shake Your Money Maker," which came out in 1990, has sold over five million copies, and their second, "The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion," released earlier this year, has already gone platinum. At first glance, they may appear to be unlikely rock heroes for 1992, but their success probably has little to do with their anachronistic trappings. While we had expected to see a retro-chic fashion show at the Beacon, what we found instead was a rather generic-looking collegiate crowd. Perhaps many Crowes fans feel the way we do—they're willing to put up with the band's posturing because they like their music. Critics have dismissed the Crowes as being too derivative by half, and some of their songs do sound like outtakes from "Exile on Main Street." But the American roots styles that the Stones tapped into—country, blues, R. & B.—are just as valid now as they were then, and the Crowes have written some winning tunes.

Unfortunately, at this show they didn't put them over with much conviction. Robinson pranced and gyrated with determination, but he couldn't compensate for his lukewarm band. The group strove for spontaneity, but much of their improvisation was flat and predictable. The Crowes may yet evolve into an effective jamming band. In the meantime, we'll keep listening to their records.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—On Sept. 8, the Oak Room awakens from its summer-long sleep with a performance by **SUSANNAH MC CORKLE**, a fine pop-jazz singer who has been known to root around in the archives for lost or forgotten numbers. Ms. McCorkle will be in residence here for the next month. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek little music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. The Ballroom is also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. Guitarist **CAETANO VELOSO** is here Sept. 8-13. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.



Barbara Cook at the Carlyle

LITHOLOGY



For the past year, the Central Park Conservancy has been at work on a stream at the points where it runs under two bridges, the Glen Span, near 102nd Street, and the Huddleston Bridge, near 106th. The two spots now look like sections of a mountain brook: a visitor can walk along a woodland path, see waterfalls and ponds, and admire some rather impressive walls of boulders. In some places, more than eight feet of silt was removed from the streambed; so the arches under both bridges now appear much higher than before; on a recent day, the waterfalls seemed to be generating their own breeze. The stream originates at a body of water called the Pool, at about 100th Street, and eventually empties, by way of a culvert under the Lasker Rink, into the Harlem Meer.

Conservancy staff members said that they intended their handiwork to make the landscape look the way it did in the late eighteen-hundreds. Thomas Giordano, director of preservation at the Conservancy, told us that he and James Yap, director of construction, worked from period photographs to identify hundreds of boulders that had toppled from their original location into the streambed. Many of them weighed a thousand pounds or more, and had to be moved with primitive devices: levers, chains, and ratchet winches called "come-alongs." Often, they were moved repeatedly before their positioning seemed accurate. Describing the placing of one particular rock along the stream bank, Giordano said, "You move it two inches to the left, and there it is. It just wants to be there."

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy, two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. The Scotty Barnhart quartet is here on Sept. 10, and the Lee Konitz & Peggy Stern quartet holds forth Sept. 11-12. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, a gift shop, and, of course, those incredible shrinking aisles that turn a mid-set dash to the rest room into something of a steeplechase. At the moment, it's celebrate-the-Old Guard time at the Blue Note: the **HERBIE MANN** 40th Anniversary Band—with **ROY AYERS**, **LES MC ANN**, **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN**, and others—is in swing Sept. 8-13; and **LIONEL HAMPTON** and the Golden Men of Jazz commence work on Sept. 15. First set at nine. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (144-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, as of Sept. 15, **BARBARA COOK**. Music Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five. . . . ♪ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **RONNY WHYTE**, who majors in Kern and minors in Porter, presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club—a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti—is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A candlelit basement restaurant within ticket-scalping distance of the Palladium. Perhaps because of its out-of-the-loop location, Condon's is one of the city's more low-key jazz clubs, a place where the seating arrangement doesn't seem intended as some kind of punishment. The sparkling bebop pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN**, who spent a considerable stretch of his career accompanying Ella Fitzgerald, will be leading a trio here Sept. 8-13. Music at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Sundays, with late sets at one on Fridays and Saturdays.

DAN LYNCH, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—As uninviting a hole-in-the-wall as you're likely to find. This blues bar is dingy, depressingly lit, and located on a block out of a Gus Van Sant movie. In the world of blues, however, this spells authenticity, and the bands here are often worth the trouble. Music from ten nightly.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—Where swordfish leap on almost every wall. Where a cat with black and white spots sometimes walks the length of the bar. Where barbirds stare at football on the tube. And where, between the Sinatra and Streisand songs that emanate from the jukebox, one can often hear snatches of live bluegrass and Irish music floating in from the bright back room. **MORNING STAR** will be here on Sept. 11. Sets at nine and ten-thirty on Fridays.

EIGHTY-EIGHT'S, 228 W. 10th St. (924-0088)—On Sept. 11, **PHILLIP OFFICER** will be in this Village cabaret, performing a set devoted to Yip Harburg, a lyricist who collaborated with the likes of Harold Arlen and Vernon Duke. The show, called "Fancy Meeting You," will include such Harburg standards as "Over the Rainbow," "It's Only a Paper Moon," and "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime." Sets at eight-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangements in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement make flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. **DOROTHY DONEGAN**, who's in action Sept. 8-13, is a pianist with a virtuosic technique that reflects both her classical training and her days as an Art Tatum protégée. But she's equally renowned for the vaudevillian antics that have been the trademark of her fifty-year career: dancing, stomping, rolling her head, impersonating jazz divas, and generally raising Cain. **MO'RY ALEXANDER** goes to work on Sept. 15. On Mon-

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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

days, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

GONZALEZ Y GONZALEZ, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big. The theme is, of course, Mexican, and you get the whole enchilada—a giant cactus here, a parade-float sombrero there, animal skulls, religious artifacts, and chili-pepper clusters everywhere. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance. Music Wednesdays and Thursdays from ten-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from twelve-thirty.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An unpretentious second-floor jazz retreat where a bandleader was once heard saying, "I wanna introduce my drummer first on account of because he has to go put a quarter in the meter." Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, a menu full of items like bangers and mash, and a piano. Knickerbocker is an airy, good-spirited place and, while music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. Pianist **HILTON RUIZ** is in residence Sept. 9-12, with bassist **JIMMY ROWSER** Sept. 11-12. Music from nine-forty-five.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situating in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. The schedule, in part: **JOEY BARON'S** Baron Down on Sept. 10; **DAVID SHEA**, **ANTHONY COLEMAN**, and others on Sept. 11; and **DON BYRON**, playing the music of Mickey Katz, Sept. 12-13. Music after nine.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—It's named for its Texas décor, but perhaps a more apt name would be the Second Chance, since so many lost, forgotten, or faded rockers turn up here. But the club's busy schedule includes a variety of newer acts, too. Music after nine. Dining.

LUDLOW STREET CAFE, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest below-stairs room that looks like a slightly spruced-up tenement-building apartment. There's cheap food, a Greater East Village crowd, and, every Monday night, **BEAT RODEO**, a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mix of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, the Velvets, and various found pop numbers. Sets from about eleven.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—This blues bar stands apart from the Upper East Side's usual array of singles bars, and has become a big draw for the neighborhood's army of post-collegiates. The neon beer signs, Manny's caps, and funky drink concoctions lend the place a frat-house aura, but don't let that put you off: this long, dark room is a good spot to catch blues artists both major and minor. Sets from nine-fifteen, except Sundays, when they begin at eight-forty-five.

MARQUEE, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—If the hero of a movie walked down this creepy, semi-deserted block, the audience would be shouting "Turn back! Turn back!" Thanks to this fine alternative-music club, though, there's usually a fairly steady flow of traffic through these parts. This week, intrepid young New Yorkers will be coming to see **BIOHAZARD**, **BURN**, and others (Sept. 11) and **SPECIAL BEAT** (Sept. 12).

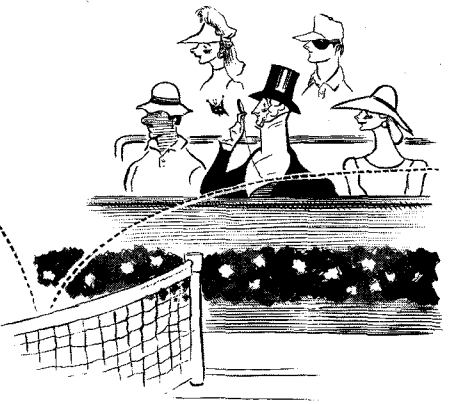
MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A plain blue back room whose far wall is decorated with round things: a Frisbee, some singles, a drum head, and the woofer from a speaker cabinet, to name a few. The beer of choice here is Rolling Rock—by a landslide—and the crowd may make you feel as if you have a midterm to study for, but many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. Shows are usually at ten on Thursdays, at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays, and at nine other nights.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room—putting-green green

carpet, lime-green leather banquettes—has more of a country-club feel. **MEL TORMÉ** begins a month-long stint on Sept. 15. The engagement marks a couple of milestones for the singer: his fiftieth album (recently released) and the fiftieth anniversary of his first big-band performance (with Chico Marx's ensemble). Tormé's recent shows have been lively, if a bit perfunctory. He dashes in, sings some remember-this-ones, spins a few yarns, dishes out the requisite hokey patter, and dashes off again. Here, backed by a sixteen-piece band, he'll be dipping into the American songbook, including a Duke Ellington salute. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There, you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here, intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, have to compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. "Say It with Music," the appealing, expertly produced Irving Berlin revue that has been filling the house for two months now, has been extended for a few more weeks. **KAYE BALLARD** heads the distinguished cast. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and, Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS**, Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Show times vary. **RITZ**, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre, once the home of Studio 54, is



now the site of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs, which was formerly located in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. **PIL** will be here on Sept. 13. Frontman John Lydon, formerly of the Sex Pistols, puts on a strangely disappointing show. The music is tight and colorful, but where Lydon's stage persona used to be all about anger, it's now all about attitude. When Lydon insults his crowds, a favorite pastime, he doesn't come off as a iconoclast, but rather as a rich, bored, aging rock star. There's no doubt that **PIL** is an occasionally brilliant band—their album "Compact Disc" was positively exco-riating—but onstage everything seems a bit choreographed. The show starts at nine.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest, this venerable club has many selling points: tropical drinks, Brazilian food, faux palm trees, a thatched-roof bar. The live music is primarily from Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, and the dance floor is usually hopping. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

SPACE AT CHASE, 98 Third Ave., at 12th St. (475-1407)—One of those East Village joints where, for a few bucks, you can hear a handful of local rock bands. As is usually the case at these establishments, some of the bands will make you want to cower under the pinball machine while others will make you want to dance and shout and start your own independent label. As for décor, there's a bar, some chairs, some tables, some walls,

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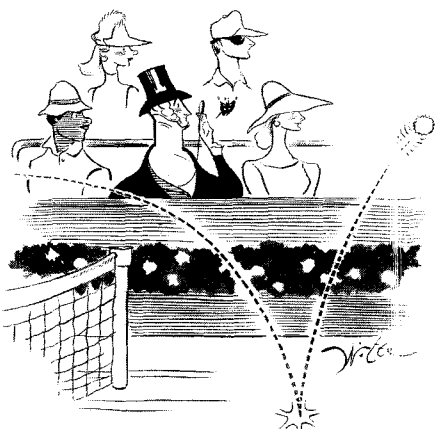
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a ceiling, and two dart boards. Music from nine-thirty, except on Tuesdays, when it starts at seven.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—One seldom sees jazz musicians leaning back to back as they kick out the jams, or craning their necks to harmonize into a mike. That's not to say that they don't interact onstage, but they're usually more subtle about it than rockers are. The nod, the glance, the faint smile are more common gestures, and this brown-toned ski chalet of a jazz club is a fine place to study such group dynamics. The **MAL WALDRON** quintet is here through Sept. 13, and the **CEDAR WALTON** trio starts up on Sept. 15. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Sets from ten. Dining.

SWEETWATERS, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, and a sunken dance floor with a circa-1975 mirrored disco ball. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and R. & B. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, located near what was once called the Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. On Sept. 16, Tramps will be the site of a benefit that will include performances by a top-flight group of singer-songwriters. Among them will be **SHAWN COLVIN** (who writes pretty, dark, thoughtful folk, which she leavens with a giddy, self-effacing stage persona), **MARSHALL CRENSHAW** (whose latest record, "Life's Too Short," is one of his stronger efforts in recent years, full of well-crafted songs and rascous guitar work), **BOB MOULD** (who led Hüsker Dü in a former life and whose new project is a terrific band called Sugar), **CHRIS STAMEY**, **JULES**



SHEAR, and **SYD STRAW**. Music from eight on weeknights and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—A celebrated, no-frills jazz shrine. **JAVON JACKSON** and friends are here Sept. 8-13; **BOBBY WATSON** and **HORIZON** kick off on Sept. 15. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—A relatively young club that has already managed to make a scene. Wetlands is usually thought of as a Deadhead hangout, but the club has also been the launching pad for a generation of young New York bands like Blues Traveler and the Spin Doctors. Shows here can be absurdly sweaty and tight—the club seems to have a hard time turning people away—and it can be hard to get a view of the stage. Still, Wetlands is such a maze of a place that there's always some mellow corner to retire to. **LOUP GAROU** is here on Sept. 11. **NEW POTATO CABOOSE**, which will play here on Sept. 15, is a Washington-based outfit that works hard for its money: their sets run from sea chanteys to gospel to country to "Ricky Raccoon" to a whole lot of seventies-style rock and roll. The group plays a long, full set, replete with solos of every variety. Shows from ten.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Music from eight every night but Sundays, when sets begin at seven-thirty.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

SUMMER at last, two weeks before Labor Day. A chance for a week-end stroll through undamp sand. At eight o'clock on Friday, traffic still clogged all the roads leading to the Triborough Bridge. As the snarl on First Avenue edged past 106th Street, a siren suddenly sounded. We were in the far right lane and pulled over. Unfortunately, we were way under the line of vision of a Mack-truck driver, who was also pulling over. When the crunching stopped, the driver's side of our car had the topography of Freddy Krueger's face. Worse, the door wouldn't open. More clumsily than angrily, we spilled out of the other side, only to discover that we were suddenly a star of street theatre for the multitudes who call this corner "the outdoors."

"Hope nobody got a gun," said an old man on the curb as he pulled out a camera and shot an entire roll photographing the damage. "What are you taking pictures for?" we asked sweetly, assuming that the man was about to offer his services as an eyewitness. "What the hell business is it of yours? You're on public property and I'll photograph this damn car if I want to, for whatever the hell reason I want." A cluster of kids on the opposite corner hissed when the truck driver emerged, looking as if he thought the whole thing was a big joke. "I can't believe you didn't see me," he said. "You got night blindness." When we suggested that the problem was more his blind-sidedness, he just shrugged and said he'd be in the truck. The kids booed at our nonviolence.

A half hour later, the police came. To them, this was all yesterday's doughnuts. But when they asked if there were any witnesses, not one onlooker volunteered to speak up. At nine-thirty, the police and the truck drove away, and we stumbled into the shredded car. Luckily, the engine turned over. We stepped on the gas. A trio of street voices chimed "Enjoy the beach!" and the crowd roared.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY— PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF PUPPET THEATRE—Two weeks of puppet-oriented performances, lectures, and movies, geared, mostly, to adult audiences and presented jointly by the Jim Henson Foundation and the people at the Public Theatre. Sept. 7 at 1 and Sept. 8-9 at 8: Vermont's Bread and Puppet Theatre. . . . Sept. 9-10 at 8 and Sept. 11-12 at 10: Roman Paska, a solo puppeteer. . . . Sept. 9-12 at 8: The Stuffed Puppet Theatre, of the Netherlands. Through Sept. 19. . . . Sept. 10 at 7:30, Sept. 11 at 8, and Sept. 13 at 1 and 5: Diabolumundo, an Argentinian group. Through Sept. 20. . . . Sept. 10-12 at 8: Paul Zaloom, who makes puppets out of junk. . . . Sept. 13 at 7:30: Theodora Skipitares, a puppeteer who makes dioramas. . . . Sept. 10 at 7:30, Sept. 11 at 8, Sept. 12 at 2 and 8, and Sept. 13 at 2 and 5: Theatre Drak, from Czechoslovakia, in a rendition of "Pinocchio." . . . Sept. 12-13 at 1 and 3: The Green Apple Puppet Theatre, from Finland. Through Sept. 20. . . . Sept. 14-15 at 8 and Sept. 16 at 2: Hystopolis Puppet Theatre, from Chicago. . . . Sept. 15-17 at 8: Eric Bass performs the final part of his "Heaven Trilogy." . . . Sept. 16 at 8: Germany's Theater Im Wind. Through Sept. 19. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. The festival continues through Sept. 20.)

ART

FALL is almost here, and it's perhaps fitting that the season's earliest art exhibitions include such grandly autumnal figures as Matisse and Magritte (at MOMA and the Met, respectively), painters whose lengthy careers continue to link us to the nineteenth century even as we approach the twenty-first.

Another well-tempered back-to-school show, smaller in scale and devoted to a living artist, will open this Friday at the Michael Werner gallery (21 East 67th Street), with recent paintings by Eugène Leroy, an eighty-two-year-old from northeastern France.

Leroy's impastoed, ruminant canvases resemble both Frank Auerbach's and Milton Resnick's. And some of Leroy's grittier surfaces may also recall the early work of Dubuffet or Masson. But Leroy, while not a hermit or even an "outsider" exactly, worked in a state of unusual independence, isolated from academic and commercial force fields, until he was past fifty, when he hooked up with Mr. Werner, in Cologne. Leroy's heated painterliness may seem overearnest to eyes accustomed to such intellectual distancing devices as kitsch and self-conscious historicism. Along with those of many other northern-European painters—Per Kirkeby, for instance—Leroy's compositions are sometimes so open as to seem irresolute, resulting in paintings full of inchoate gesture and primal incident. Leroy's titles—"February White," "Dark Summer Flowers"—announce the onset of a dismal winter, as well as the vividness of what comes before.

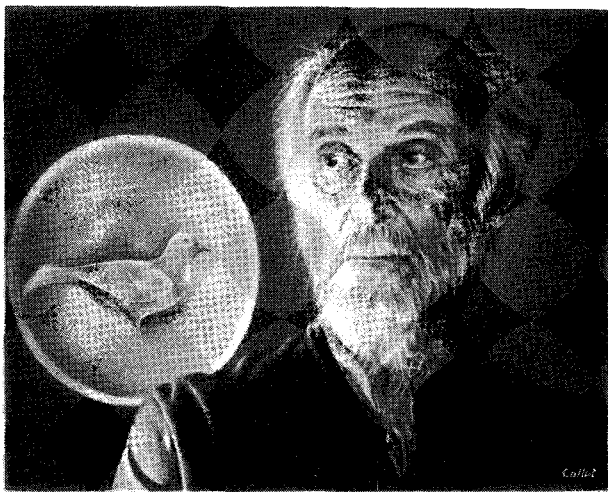
(A concurrent show of recent paintings by Leroy will open on September 12 at Thorp, 103 Prince Street.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—*Ceci n'est pas une rétrospective*: The Magritte bash will include more than a hundred and fifty paintings, drawings, bronzes, and other objects. Starts Sept. 12. . . . Islam's influence on Spanish culture is one of the great, long chapters in the book of civilization. Beginning in the eighth century, with the appearance of magical animal figures and charmed vegetation on Romanesque columns, and peaking during the so-called Dark Ages, with an awe-inspiring fusion of North African, Mesopotamian, and Latin traditions, the Muhammadan effect on the Iberian Peninsula is one big aesthetic seduction. "Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain" is nevertheless a neurotic exhibition. First assembled at the Alhambra, in Granada, "Al-Andalus" began life as an extravagant display of vitrines in which ancient shards and fragile manuscripts were treated as if they were premature infants. Now in New York, these powerful objects—a mysterious bronze griffin, on loan from Pisa; an intricately carved wood cupola ceiling, from the Alhambra's Palacio del Partal; a group of exquisitely written Korans; a vermillion curtain of quasi-minimalist abstract splendor; an intense, oversized Alhambra vase—are quarantined in the Lehman Wing. The installation looks good, particularly in relation to the Moorish-flavored red brick façades that wall the exhibition space. Yet "Al-Andalus" does not convey the full range and formal excellence of Islamic Spain, nor does it transport one, Disney-style, to some debased but entertaining version of it. Rather, it's the ghost of the museum extravaganzas of the "Bonfire" decade. Viewers at the Met can enhance

ART-Cont'd

their experience with a visit to the museum's sensational, under-trafficked Islamic wing: the eighteenth-century room from Damascus is enough to send you on a sultry brief vacation. Through Sept. 27. . . . ¶ The recent donation of the Perls collection—a hundred and sixty-three objects from the kingdom of Benin—has substantially redefined the museum's African holdings. This exhibition of the collection is a welcome relief from the rigid theatre of many of the museum's blockbusters: it enables viewers to make their own discoveries. The art from Benin, dating from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth, is quite naturalistic and of high quality. There are brass heads of kings and queen mothers that feature the precious coral-bead collars worn by royalty; a number of plaques, depicting processions and the court hierarchy, which adorned the pillars of the royal palace; bells, altar rings, and numerous other ceremonial objects; and a brass rooster, which, as a symbol of power, would have honored



Morris Graves

a queen mother. Through Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "Modern Design: 1890-1990" shows off the museum's holdings in twentieth-century furniture, architectural and design drawings, glass, ceramics, and other objects. Through Oct. 25. . . . **NOTE:** The roof garden, with eight sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"The Photographs of Lucas Samaras" includes thirty works from his many series of Polaroids. Through Dec. 1. (See Photography listing.) . . . ¶ "The Young Rebel in American Photography, 1950-1970" presents work by, among others, Diane Arbus, Larry Clark, Bruce Davidson, Robert Frank, and Lee Friedlander. Through Oct. 13. (See Photography listing.) . . . ¶ Cults of personality, while working wonders for the business of many modern designers, have at times spoiled the idealism in which modern design is rooted. The Finnish designer Kaj Franck, who shunned stardom, happily never had any trouble finding buyers for his remarkably lean and timeless utilitarian pieces. In this small, pleasant exhibition, Franck's gloriously spare designs are left to speak for themselves. Particularly impressive is his Kilita tableware, which was in production from 1953 to 1975 and still looks contemporary. Its finely tuned colors, in such contrasting shades as deep aqua green and chartreuse, seem like refined versions of our own Fiesta ware. Even when he worked at the higher end of the market, Franck kept his purity intact. His Soap Bubble vases, from the nineteen-fifties, are so lifelike that they look ready to float blissfully away. Through Oct. 12. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The permanent collection is on view in the small rotunda and the new annex. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Homecoming: William H. Johnson and Afro-America, 1938-46." This show

goes into the painter's later styles in greater depth than the complementary show (through Sept. 20) at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Presenting a "positive image" of black American culture seems to be the Whitney's goal. Johnson's worldliness and formal ties, however, may have been slighted. Through Oct. 25. . . . ¶ An auxiliary exhibition, "Parallel Visions," draws on the museum's permanent collection to provide a context for viewing the works of Johnson. Among the artists represented here are Philip Evergood, Edward Hopper, Jacob Lawrence, Ben Shahn, and Alice Trumbull Mason. Through Oct. 25. . . . ¶ A large show of twentieth-century figurative works from the collection. Starts Sept. 9. . . . ¶ The third part of a show of recent additions to the museum's collection; more than seventy paintings and sculptures are included. Through Sept. 20. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Painters of a New Century: The Eight & American Art," an exhibition devoted to the work

of the turn-of-the-century painters known as the Eight: Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens, Robert Henri, Ernest Lawson, George Luks, Maurice Prendergast, Everett Shinn, and John Sloan. Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ Complementing the "Eight" show is a smaller display of prints, drawings, watercolors, and pastels by these same artists, as well as by George Bellows, Jerome Myers, and Walt Kuhn. Through Sept. 21. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"The Prehistoric Mammals of Charles R. Knight" features thirty paintings and sculptural recreations by the artist, who, in preparation for his work, painstakingly studied both fossils and living animals. Through Nov. 1. . . . ¶ A

large exhibition titled "Global Warming—Understanding the Forecast," which was developed by the museum and the Environmental Defense Fund. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—The second part of "A Decade of Craft" features ceramics, metalwork, and fibre art from the permanent collection. Through Nov. 8. . . . ¶ Teapots, bowls, chairs, and many other forms made in multiple are the focus of

"More Than One: Contemporary Studio Production." Through Nov. 8. . . . ¶ "Marigold," an installation by Robert Kushner, is on view in the lobby. Through Sept. 21. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—The American hand-carved walking stick (more varieties than you can shake one at) is the subject of "Step Lively: The Art of the Folk Cane." Through Sept. 13. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Broadway! 125 Years of Musical Theatre." A large assortment of objects—including paintings, posters, sheet music, and memorabilia—from nearly seventy-five productions that have bowed on the Great White Way. First seen in New York last summer at the IBM Gallery. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A hundred and twenty-four prints, drawings, and watercolors by the German artist Lovis Corinth (1858-1925). Through Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "The Artist's Eye," the first in a series of exhibitions to be organized by artists who are academy members. Philip Pearlstein has done the selecting here; among the forty works on view are Ryder's "Marine" and Sargent's "Portrait of Monet." Through Jan. 15. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Ansel Adams: The Early Years" covers the period from 1919 to 1941

and includes, along with several of the famous Western landscapes, lesser-known still-lives, portraits, and views of New York City. Through Oct. 11. . . . ¶ An exhibition, mostly of paintings, from the collection of the Century Association. Some of the works, such as Albert Bierstadt's "Guerrilla Warfare, Civil War" (1862) and Winslow Homer's "Nurse and Child" (1868), were accepted by the association in lieu of an initiation fee. Through Oct. 11. . . . ¶ "Party Time: Presidential Campaigns Since 1832," a large gathering of glorious political artifacts. Through Sept. 20. (In conjunction with the exhibition, the society and the League of Women Voters will offer voter registration on Sept. 17 from 5 to 8 P.M.) (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"In Life or Death Forever," a comprehensive show commemorating the centenary of Walt Whitman's death, includes a hundred and fifty manuscripts, books, photographs, and letters, culled from both the Berg and Oscar Lion collections. Through Sept. 12. (Berg Exhibition Room.) (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

ISAMU NOGUCHI GARDEN MUSEUM, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88) designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his own sculptures. The entire range of his work is on view, from the early surrealist biomorphic sculptures through several types of stone carvings, and including documentation of his prodigious public-art projects. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with sculptures. Through Nov. 28. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART, Flushing Meadow Park—"Colombia: Contemporary Images," an exhibition of paintings and sculptures by thirty-five native Colombians. Through Sept. 13. . . .

¶ Drawings and distorted silhouettes by Brazilian installation artist Regina Silveira. Through Sept. 13. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of the career of William H. Johnson, in conjunction with the "Homecoming" show at the Whitney Museum. Johnson, who was born in 1901, in Florence, South Carolina, moved to New York in 1918, and soon enrolled in the National Academy of Design. In 1926, he moved to France, and then, after a brief return to the States, he moved to Scandinavia, in 1930. He lived there for nearly a decade while travelling widely with his wife, a Danish textile artist. Landscapes from this period, and expressionistic portraits such as his remarkable "Young Pastry Cook" (ca. 1928-1930), recall Vlaminck, Soutine, and particularly Alice Neel. When Johnson returned to America, in 1938, he, in effect, cleansed his palette, and his work assumed the cadences of the black Southern folkloric tradition, both rural and urban. The work from 1938 to about 1945 includes many bright, deceptively simple watercolors in which black soldiers are depicted boarding trains, marching, fighting, convalescing, or being killed. He also produced a buoyant array of highly stylized history paintings commemorating such important figures as Nat Turner and the signers of the Yalta agreements. Around the time of his wife's death, in 1943, the artist turned increasingly to religious hymns and traditional spirituals for inspiration. He also returned to Denmark for a last visit. By 1947, Johnson's career as an artist was over: thoroughly incapacitated by syphilis-induced paresis, he was committed to Long Island's Central Islip State Hospital, where he died in 1970. The small but representative show here gives the viewer an over-all sense of the shape of Johnson's oeuvre. Through Sept. 20. . . . ¶ An exhibition of a dozen large-scale paintings and a dozen works on paper by William T. Williams. Through Nov. 15. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

"PUTT-MODERNISM"—An entertaining and provocative eighteen-hole miniature-golf course, in which each hole has been designed by a different contemporary artist. In Gregory

Amenoff's piece, the ball travels down a time line of Elvis's life to a cup labelled "Las Vegas: Hole of Fate." Pat Oleszko and Ward Shelley have you trying to outmaneuver their larger-than-life inflatable clown, who wears a hat called Censorama and looks suspiciously like Jesse Helms. The hole designed by Chris Clarke—a Bronx native who used to play miniature golf under the Broadway El—is a comment about the government's neglect of the AIDS epidemic; you put the ball along a path and then through a replica of the White House made of neon tubes and AZT and Zovirax bottles. The golf balls are imprinted with "truisms" by Jenny Holzer ("Raise boys and girls the same way," "Absolute submission can be a form of freedom"). You can rent a putter for five bucks, and just looking is free. Through Sept. 27. (Artists Space, 223 West Broadway. The course is open Thursdays through Saturdays from noon until midnight and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Sundays from noon until ten.)

"UP RIVER!"—Cruise up the Hudson in Midtown. Selected from the Hudson River Museum of Westchester, this show features more than fifty nineteenth-century paintings and drawings, along with rare books, works on paper, and photographs. Among the artists represented are George Inness, William Hart, Jasper Cropsey, Henry Suydam, James Bard, and Julian O. Davidson. Through Oct. 2. (PaineWebber Building, Sixth Ave. at 52nd St. Open Mondays, except Sept. 7, through Fridays, 8 to 6.)

SEASON OPENERS—**LUCY BARBER**, First Street Gallery, 560 Broadway (starts Sept. 8); **JOHN CAGE**, Roeder, 545 Broadway (through Oct. 10); **COLIN CHASE**, Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Sept. 29); **AVA GERBER**, Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Sept. 26); **MORRIS GRAVES**, Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. (opens Saturdays at noon, starts Sept. 9); **ILYA KABUKOV**, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (starts Sept. 12); **SILVIA KOLBOWSKI**, Postmasters, 80 Greene St. (starts Sept. 12); **ANDREW KRASNOW** and **DOUGLAS BLACK**, Stux, 163 Mercer St. (starts Sept. 12); **JUSTEN LADDA**, Gorney, 100 Greene St. (starts Sept. 12); **DAVID NASH**, Louver, 130 Prince St. (starts Sept. 12); **TOM OTTERNESS**, Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (starts Sept. 12); **IRVING PETLIN**, Kent, 47 E. 63rd St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, starts Sept. 9); **DIEGO RIVERA**, Martin, 23 E. 73rd St. (through Sept. 26); **BEVERLY SEMMES**, Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (starts Sept. 8); **STEPHEN TANIS**, French, 24 W. 57th St. (through Sept. 26); **RICHARD TUTTLE**, Boone, 417 West Broadway (starts Sept. 12); **ABRAHAM WALKOWITZ**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (starts Sept. 8); **ELLEN WIENER**, Pearl, 420 West Broadway (starts Sept. 9); **JACKIE WINSOR**, Cooper, 149 Wooster St. (starts Sept. 8).

OTHER VENUES

"ART IN THE ANCHORAGE"—Creative Time has mounted its ninth annual summer salon in the vaults of the Brooklyn Bridge. On view are six installations, by Helene Aylon, Grechen Bender, Mildred Howard, Seiko Mikami, the Women's Action Coalition, and Liz Young, a continuous slide presentation of works by photographers Nina Kuo, Dona McAdams, Marilyn Nance, and Lynda Rodolitz, and a memorial exhibition of works by furniture designer and graphic artist Don Ruddy. Several readings, panel discussions, and performances are also scheduled at various times during the run of the show. Through Sept. 20. (Cadman Plaza West at Front St., Brooklyn. Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

"CROSS SECTION"—Battery Park City has been transformed into one huge indoor-and-outdoor sculpture park for this show of seventy-five contemporary works, which are on loan from nineteen New York City museums. Among the sixty-five artists represented are Viola Frey, Nam June Paik, Alfredo Jaar, Louise Bourgeois, Christian Marclay, Isamu Noguchi, and Faith Ringgold. Through Sept. 20. (Battery Park City and World Financial Center. Exhibition guides are available at kiosks throughout the area.)

"HOUSES OF SPIRIT/MEMORIES OF ANCESTORS"—Another outdoor sculpture show, only this time the setting is Woodlawn Cemetery, in the Bronx. Each of the eight works deals in some way with the here and now, the hereafter, and concepts of family, gender, and home. Artists include Tom Finkelpearl, Kathleen McCarthy, Renee Stout, and Dina Burstein. Through Nov. 1. (Jerome Ave. entrance, at Bainbridge Ave. Open daily, 9 to 4:30.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

WHEN, in the early eighties, images of the human body began appearing in the work of so many artists, there were those who said, "The figure is back in art," and, of course, those who replied, "But it never left." Still, there really was something new happening, and a lot of this work was very different from, say, the figurative art produced earlier in the century. In photography especially, the images reflected changes that were occurring in society's attitudes toward the body. Whether you were looking at Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs of a female body builder, or his image of two men embracing for all the world to see, or Chuck Close's gigantic, almost microscopically detailed portraits, it was evident that a kind of theatre of the body was in the making.

All along, John Coplans has been exploring this theme in his own particular way: with self-portraits—nudes—whose forceful scale and intimate revelations are paradoxically disarming. Coplans' photographs are the opposite of airbrushed coverups. His paunch, his moles, his body hair, his elderliness—all have been an unabashed part of his spectacle of honesty, vanity, and reality. Now, at the Andrea Rosen gallery (130 Prince Street; starts September 11), we can see some of Coplans' most recent photographs of his body—specifically, of his back—in about a half dozen works that are more than six feet high. These pieces take self-examination all the way—and back, for in their topographical appearance they are reminiscent of the ambitious earth art that began in the late sixties.

LUCAS SAMARAS—This artist has worked for decades in such varied mediums as painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography, but this show offers only one fragment of his vision: a selection of the Polaroid pieces he made between 1969 and 1986. Like the rest of his work, these photos demonstrate his capacity to find infinite possibilities and complexities in seemingly simple things. Many of these images are about breaking through the surface to reveal the depths; in a number of the photographs he has actually worked with a knife, slicing and cutting and then putting a tableau together. Through Dec. 1. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

"THE YOUNG REBEL IN AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY, 1950-1970"—A perennial American type is being explored in this smart show. Some of the images of rebels here seem innocent by today's standards—such as Bruce Davidson's photographs of a gang of teen-agers whose symbols of rebellion are cigarettes and beer. But there are also tougher pictures, such as Larry Clark's 1971 photographs of kids shooting up, and Diane Arbus's picture of a transvestite sitting on a bed. Through Oct. 13. (Museum of Modern Art.)

SEASON OPENERS—**HARRY CALLAHAN** and **AARON SISKIND**, Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (starts Sept. 10); **LARRY CLARK**, Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (starts Sept. 12); **GEOFFREY JAMES**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (starts Sept. 8); **GEANNA MEROLA**, Saul, 155 Spring St. (starts Sept. 10); **DUANE MICHALS** and **LOIS GREENFIELD**, International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; both shows start Sept. 11); **CHUCK NANEY**, Wooster Gardens, 40 Wooster St. (starts Sept. 12); **MARIO CRAVO NETO**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway (starts Sept. 10).



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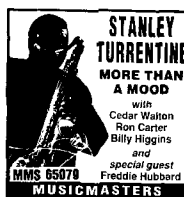
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MUSIC

OPERA folk have been hearing about composer's block lately—the last thing the world needs, since competent opera composers are already hard to find. A recent Sunday *Times* had an article about the tortuous progress of a Jacob Druckman work once intended for the Metropolitan. And we hear through the grapevine that John Adams, perhaps discouraged by the tepid response to his second opera, "The Death of Klinghoffer," is stuck. Many people still remember how Samuel Barber, after his second opera flopped on the opening night of the new Met, in 1966, went into a composer's block that was more or less permanent. We're assuming, with fingers crossed, that Philip Glass's "The Voyage," due this fall at the same house, is safely complete, and that Mr. Glass is already at work on his next project. What pressure these guys must feel, having to produce for a global opera consortium that reserves perhaps five per cent of the space in its repertoire for new works! One result is that an awfully glaring light gets focussed on fledgling efforts. (Mr. Druckman's opera will be his first; John Corigliano's, last season, was his first; Mr. Glass's will be his fourth or so, depending on how you count.)

Historically, operatic craft is not something composers have mastered on the first few tries. What maiden operas clearly surpass Mr. Adams' first opera, "Nixon in China"? We'd name "Wozzeck," "Pelléas et Mélisande," "Dido and Aeneas," and "Fidelio"; if there are many more, the titles don't spring to mind. And how many of us can name, off the top of our head, the first or second operas of Verdi, Wagner, Mozart, Strauss, Puccini, Donizetti, Rossini, Gluck, or Handel? Take heart, Mr. Druckman. And here's a memo to Mr. Adams: One of the composers mentioned above, Verdi, was very depressed after his second opera was ill received, and, to hear him tell it, he developed what we would probably call composer's block. But he got over it, and his next twenty-five were pretty good.

OPERA

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—RIGOLETTO, with Elizabeth Futral, Susanne Marsee, Richard Drews, Donnie Ray Albert, and Kevin Bell; conducted by Joseph Colaneri. (Sept. 9 and Sept. 12 at 8.)... **IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA**, with Kathryn Gamberoni, Paul Austin Kelly, Robert Orth, and Jan Opalach; Scott Bergeson. (Sept. 10 at 8 and Sept. 13 at 1:30.)... **DOKTOR**

FAUST, by Ferruccio Busoni, in its New York stage premiere, with Eva Zsellar, Michael Rees Davis, and William Stone; Christopher Keene. (Sept. 11 at 8.)... **TURANDOT**, with Ealynn Voss, Christiane Riel, Antonio Barasorda, and Philip Cokorinos; Steven Sloane. (Sept. 12 at 1:30.)... **THE DESERT SONG**, by Sigmund Romberg, with Linda Michele, Lillian Graff, Richard White, Philip Wm. McKinley, John Daniecki, and Louis Otey; Chris Nance. (Sept. 15 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—The company's forty-fifth season opens with a month-long run of "Rigoletto." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 12 at 7:30 and Sept. 13 at 2:30.)

CONCERTS

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Happy birthday to the Philharmonic, which this year celebrates the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding. In the opening concert of its sesquicentennial season, Kurt Masur conducts excerpts from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" and the Symphonic Dances from Bernstein's "West Side Story." In addition, soprano Kathleen Battle appears as soloist in orchestra-



The B-52's

GERALD RANCK—The harpsichordist continues his survey of Domenico Scarlatti's sonatas. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. Sept. 13 at 3. For information about tickets, call 874-5210.)

PIANO-WIND QUINTETS—Pianist Ilan Rechtman and wind-playing colleagues offer quintets by Mozart and Beethoven. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Sept. 13 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

LEONID HAMBRO—Concertgoers of a certain age will remember Mr. Hambro as New York's House Pianist, an epithet he earned several decades back because of his ubiquity: he was a member of the New York Philharmonic, one of the city's busiest free-lance musicians, and half of a sparkling piano duo he established with Jascha Zayde. In 1970, he left the city to join the California Institute of the Arts, and he has been scarce in these parts since then (though he continued to tour as Victor Borge's backup pianist and as the head of a four-piano ensemble). This concert will be a "command performance"—at the command of the audience, that is, since attendees will themselves choose the program (through a sort of lottery) from a list of more than a hundred pieces assembled by Mr. Hambro. We're hoping that, among the many tempting items on the list, the audience will demand some Gershwin (which will give the pianist a chance to relate a swell anecdote about Paul Whiteman and the "Rhapsody in Blue"), some Godowsky (which can be relied on to make the most virtuosic pianists sweat), and some Rosemary Brown (the English housewife who recounted in her memoirs—published in 1971—how she spent many years writing down new compositions dictated to her by the ghosts of Beethoven, Liszt, and others). (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 13 at 7.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER—In the first concert of its season, the Society honors its founding chairman and great patroness, Alice Tully, on the occasion of her ninetieth birthday. The wide-ranging program will alight on works by Bach, Mozart, and Poulenc, among others, and the all-star

roster looks like this: soprano Dawn Upshaw, tenor Robert White, flutist Paula Robison, clarinetist David Shifrin (who was recently installed as the Society's artistic director), violinists Ani Kavafian and Isaac Stern, violists Paul Neubauer and Walter Trampler, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, organist Anthony Newman, and pianists Richard Goode, Charles Wadsworth, and André Previn. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Sept. 14 at 8.)

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PERSONAL APPEARANCES

THE B-52's—1979: You live in a college dorm that for a whole year continuously throbs with the New Wave beat of the B-52's first album. You try to explain "Rock Lobster" to your mother. Flash-forward. 1989: Five records later, the '2's reach the high end of the charts for the first time ever with "Cosmic Thing." You buy tickets to the concert at Radio City. The whole shack shimmies. 1992: A certain band, though more serious than it used to be, is still singing odes to certain things like hot pants and U.F.O.s. (You miss Cindy Wilson but look forward to hearing Julee Cruise, who, at least for the tour, has taken her spot.) You anticipate a bodacious good time at Jones Beach; you and the B-52's, well, y'all are carrying on. (Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. Sept. 12 at 8.)

JOE COCKER—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Sept. 10 at 8.

BLUES CONCERT—B. B. King, Dr. John, Buddy Guy, and the Fabulous Thunderbirds. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 10 at 7:30.)

ASHFORD & SIMPSON—With Phyllis Hyman. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. Sept. 12 at 7 and 11.)

CAROL WOODS—92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Sept. 12 at 8.

EN VOGUE—With Arrested Development. (Radio City Music Hall. Sept. 15-16 at 8.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

YANKEES—Vs. the Kansas City Royals, Sept. 11 at 7:30, and Sept. 12-13 at 1:30. ... **CHICAGO WHITE SOX**, Sept. 14-16 at 7:30.

METS—Vs. the St. Louis Cardinals, Sept. 16-17 at 7:40.

GIANTS—Vs. the Dallas Cowboys, Sept. 13 at 1. (The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000; the Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and the Giants play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-8111.)

RACING

HORSES—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Jerome is on Sept. 7 and the Flower Bowl is on Sept. 12. ... At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays, through Saturdays at 7:30. Post time on Sept. 7 is 1. ... **TROTTING** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:45.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

BIKE RIDE—A hundred-mile-long pleasure tour through four boroughs, which benefits Transportation Alternatives, an environmentally minded group. The route traverses shoreline, parks, and residential neighborhoods; less than totally buff bikers may drop in or out at points along the way. (Sept. 13, starting at 6 A.M. For more information, call 475-4600.)

UNVEILING—The main attraction of this year's Songwriters' Showcase, sponsored jointly by ASCAP and MAC, is Margaret Whiting's performance of a new number by Ervin Drake. In all, twelve new songs will be sung by thirteen cabaret singers. (Caroline's Comedy Club, 1626 Broadway, at 49th St. Sept. 15 at 5:45. Tickets at the door on the evening of the recital.)

A READING—Sept. 15 at 7:30: W. S. Merwin reads from his own poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

WALKS—Sept. 12 at 1: A radical walking tour of the East Village. For more information, call 1-718 482-0088. ... **SEPT. 13 at 2:30**: A stroll through downtown Brooklyn, sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. For more information, call 265-2663.

MEMORANDUM—The Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit continues Sept. 12-13, from noon to sundown.

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 Theatre 3: "The Living End" (Gregg Araki).
 Theatre 4: "Johnny Suede" (Tom DiCillo), with Brad Pitt and Catherine Keener.
 Theatre 5: "Night on Earth" (†).
 Theatre 6: "Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French).

LITTLE THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

- Through Sept. 10: (Separate admissions) "Woman Demon Human" (1987, Huang Schugin; in Mandarin); and "Limite" (1931, Mario Peixoto; a Brazilian silent film).
 Sept. 11: (Separate admissions) "Brother Bread, Sister Puppet" (1992, Jim Farber); and "Dreamchild" (†).
 Sept. 12: (Separate admissions) "The Muppet Movie" (1979, James Frawley); "Labyrinth" (1986, Jim Henson); and "Dreamchild" (†).
 Sept. 13: (Separate admissions) "The Great Muppet Caper" (1981, Jim Henson); "Fool's Fire" (1992, Julie Taymor) and two films by the Brothers Quay—"The Comb" (1991) and "Anamorphosis" (1991); and "Dreamchild" (†).
 Sept. 14: (Separate admissions) "Lili" (1953, Charles Walters), with Leslie Caron, Mel Ferrer, and Jean-Pierre Aumont; and "Dreamchild" (†).
 Sept. 15: (Separate admissions) "Moving Objects" (1991, Leonard Retel Helmrich); and "Dreamchild" (†).
 Sept. 16: (Separate admissions) "Fool's Fire" (1992, Julie Taymor) and two films by the Brothers Quay—"The Comb" (1991) and "Anamorphosis" (1991); and "Dreamchild" (†).

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

- Theatre 1: Through Sept. 10: "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee. From Sept. 11: "Hellraiser III: Hell on Earth" (Anthony Hickox), with Terry Farrell, Doug Bradley, and Kevin Bernhardt.

Theatre 2: "Unforgiven" (†).
 Theatre 3: "Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.

VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)

- Theatre 1: "Stay Tuned" (Peter Hyams), with John Ritter and Pam Dawber.
 Theatre 2: "Single White Female" (†).
 Theatre 3: "A League of Their Own" (†).
 Theatre 4: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Harry Dean Stanton, and Moira Kelly.

Theatre 5: Through Sept. 10: "Single White Female" (†). From Sept. 11: "Blade Runner" (†).

Theatre 6: "One False Move" (†).

Theatre 7: "Bob Roberts" (†).

VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)

- Theatre 1: "Sister Act" (†).
 Theatre 2: "The Player" (†).
 Theatre 3: "London Kills Me" (Hanif Kureishi), with Justin Chadwick.
 Theatre 4: Through Sept. 10: "Via Appia" (Jochen Hick). From Sept. 11: "Crossing the Bridge" (Mike Binder), with Jason Gedrick, Josh Charles, and Stephen Baldwin.
 Theatre 5: "The Hairdresser's Husband" (Patrice Leconte, in French).

Theatre 6: "A Stranger Among Us" (†).

Theatre 7: Through Sept. 8: (Matinées only) "Freddie as F.R.O.7." (Jon Acevski), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Mo' Money" (Peter Macdonald), with Damon Wayans. From Sept. 9: "A Man Without a World" (Eleanor Antin).

19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

- Theatre 1: "Whispers in the Dark" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Boomerang" (†).
 Theatre 3: "Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.
 Theatre 4: "Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).
 Theatre 5: "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" (John Glen), with George Corraface.
 Theatre 6: "Unforgiven" (†).

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 16.



At the Walter Reade Theatre, films by Maurice Pialat

"Raise the Red Lantern" (Zhang Yimou; in Chinese).

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
 Through Sept. 10: "Single White Female" (†).

From Sept. 11: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix, Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.

MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

Theatre 1: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Harry Dean Stanton, and Moira Kelly.

Theatre 2: Through Sept. 10: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me." From Sept. 11: "Crossing the Bridge" (Mike Binder), with Jason Gedrick, Josh Charles, and Stephen Baldwin.

Theatre 3: (Separate admissions) "Diggstown" (Michael Ritchie), with James Woods, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Bruce Dern; and "Raising Cain" (†).

Theatre 4: "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee.

34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).

Theatre 2: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 3: "Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Death Becomes Her" (†).

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"The Ox" (Sven Nykvist, in Swedish).

SUTTON I AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Theatre 1: "The Hairdresser's Husband" (Patrice Leconte, in French).

Theatre 2: "One False Move" (†).

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Storyville" (Mark Frost), with James Spader, Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, and Jason Robards.

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"A Tale of Springtime" (Eric Rohmer, in French).

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee.

Theatre 2: "Rapid Fire."

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Mo' Money" (Peter Macdonald), with Damon Wayans.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 8: "Death Becomes Her" (†). From Sept. 9: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Harry Dean Stanton, and Moira Kelly.

Theatre 2: Through Sept. 8: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me." From Sept. 9: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix, Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Bob Roberts" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Sept. 10: "Enchanted April" (†). From Sept. 11: "Crossing the Bridge" (Mike Binder), with Jason Gedrick, Josh Charles, and Stephen Baldwin.

Theatre 3: "Sister Act" (†).

ART EAST CINEMA, 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)
 Through Sept. 10: "Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).

From Sept. 11: To be announced.

FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)

Theatre 1: "Raising Cain" (†).

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "Freddie as F.R.O.7." (Jon Acevski), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Raising Cain" (†).

Theatre 3: "Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.

Theatre 4: "Diggstown" (Michael Ritchie), with James Woods, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Bruce Dern.

Theatre 5: "Out on a Limb" (Francis Veber), with Matthew Broderick.

Theatre 6: "The Player" (†).

GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Manhattan" (1979, Woody Allen), with Allen, Diane Keaton, Michael Murphy, and Meryl Streep.

Theatre 2: Through Sept. 10: "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" (John Glen), with George Corraface. From Sept. 11: "Wind" (Carroll Ballard), with Matthew Modine and Jennifer Grey.

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"Single White Female" (†).

NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 2: "Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
 "Light Sleeper" (Paul Schrader), with Willem Dafoe and Susan Sarandon.

TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"A League of Their Own" (†).

EAST 85TH STREET, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

Through Sept. 10: (Matinées only) "Honey, I Blew up the Kid" (Randal Kleiser), with Rick Moranis and Marcia Strassman; and (evenings only) "A Stranger Among Us" (†).

From Sept. 11: "Hellraiser III: Hell on Earth" (Anthony Hickox), with Terry Farrell, Doug Bradley, and Kevin Bernhardt.

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 10: "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee. From Sept. 11: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix, Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.

Theatre 2: "Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).

ORPHEUM VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)

Theatre 1: "Single White Female" (†).

Theatre 2: "Single White Female" (†).

Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "Freddie as F.R.O.7." (Jon Acevski), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Whispers in the Dark" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Sept. 10: "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" (John Glen), with George Corraface. From Sept. 11: "Where the Day Takes You" (Marc Rocco), with Sean Astin, Lara Flynn Boyle, Peter Dobson, Balthazar Getty, Ricki Lake, James LeGros, and Dermot Mulroney.

Theatre 5: "Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.

Theatre 6: "Diggstown" (Michael Ritchie), with James Woods, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Bruce Dern.

Theatre 7: "Unforgiven" (†).

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Boomerang" (†); and "Patriot Games" (Phillip Noyce), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "3 Ninjas" (Jon Turteltaub), with Victor Wong; and (evenings only) "Death Becomes Her" (†).

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 8: "Wild Wheels" (directed by Harrod Blank), a documentary.
From Sept. 9: "Brother's Keeper" (Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Gas Food Lodging" (Allison Anders).

WAYERLY I AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 10: "Laws of Gravity" (Nick Gomez). From Sept. 11: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix, Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.
Theatre 2: "Raising Cain" (†).

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 2th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).
Theatre 2: "Out on a Limb" (Francis Veber), with Matthew Broderick.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "A Tale of Springtime" (Eric Rohmer, in French).
Theatre 2: "Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).
Theatre 3: "The Tune" (Bill Plympton), an animated film.
Theatre 4: (Separate admissions) "The Ox" (Sven Nykvist, in Swedish); and "The Best Intentions" (†).

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Harry Dean Stanton, and Moira Kelly.
Theatre 2: "Raising Cain" (†).
Theatre 3: "Death Becomes Her" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 10: "Out on a Limb" (Francis Veber), with Matthew Broderick.
From Sept. 11: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix, Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.
Theatre 5: "A League of Their Own" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Sept. 10: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me." From Sept. 11: "Crossing the Bridge" (Mike Binder), with Jason Gedrick, Josh Charles, and Stephen Baldwin.
Theatre 7: "Single White Female" (†).
Theatre 8: (Matinées only) "Freddie as F.R.O.7." (Jon Acevski), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Diggsdown" (Michael Ritchie), with James Woods, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Bruce Dern.
Theatre 9: "Single White Female" (†).

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee.
Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "3 Ninjas" (Jon Turteltaub), with Victor Wong; and (evenings only) "Mo' Money" (Peter Macdonald), with Damon Wayans.
Theatre 3: "Sister Act" (†).

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

Through Sept. 10: "3 Ninjas" (Jon Turteltaub), with Victor Wong.
From Sept. 11: "Crossing the Bridge" (Mike Binder), with Jason Gedrick, Josh Charles, and Stephen Baldwin.

WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "Single White Female" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 3: "A League of Their Own" (†).
Theatre 4: (Matinées only) "Freddie as F.R.O.7." (Jon Acevski), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Whispers in the Dark" (†).
Theatre 5: "Raising Cain" (†).
Theatre 6: "Out on a Limb" (Francis Veber), with Matthew Broderick.

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Death Becomes Her" (†).

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"A League of Their Own" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Mistress" (Barry Primus), with Robert Wuhl.

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

Theatre 1: "Zentropa" (Lars Von Trier, in English and German).

Theatre 2: "The Best Intentions" (†).

FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)

"Howards End" (†).

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"The Player" (†).

COLUMBUS CIRCLE, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

Through Sept. 10: "Bob Roberts" (†).
From Sept. 11: "Crossing the Bridge" (Mike Binder), with Jason Gedrick, Josh Charles, and Stephen Baldwin.

62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).

LINCOLN PLAZA I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "La Discreète" (Christian Vincent; in French).

Theatre 2: "A Brief History of Time" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Sept. 10: "A Brief History of Time" (†). From Sept. 11: "Swoon" (Tom Kalin), with Craig Chester and Daniel Schlachet.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Through Sept. 10: "Death Becomes Her" (†).
From Sept. 11: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix, Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.

84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.
Theatre 2: "Single White Female" (†).
Theatre 3: "Light Sleeper" (Paul Schrader), with Willem Dafoe, Susan Sarandon, Dana Delany, David Clennon, Victor Garber, and Mary Beth Hurt.

Theatre 4: Through Sept. 10: "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" (John Glen), with George Corraface. From Sept. 11: "Where the Day Takes You" (Marc Rocco), with Sean Astin, Lara Flynn Boyle, Peter Dinklage, Balthazar Getty, Ricki Lake, James LeGros, and Dermot Mulroney.

Theatre 5: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 6: "Enchanted April" (†).

METRO CINEMA I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Out on a Limb" (Francis Veber), with Matthew Broderick.

Theatre 2: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Harry Dean Stanton, and Moira Kelly.

OLYMPIA I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "A League of Their Own" (†).

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "Freddie as F.R.O.7." (Jon Acevski), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 10: "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" (directed by John Glen), with George Corraface. From Sept. 11: "Wind" (Carroll Ballard), with Matthew Modine and Jennifer Grey.
Theatre 2: "Universal Soldier" (Roland Emmerich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme and Dolph Lundgren.

Theatre 3: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 4: "Batman Returns" (†).

Theatre 5: Through Sept. 10: "Basic Instinct" (Paul Verhoeven), with Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone. From Sept. 11: "Hellraiser III: Hell on Earth" (Anthony Hickox), with Terry Farrell, Doug Bradley, and Kevin Bernhardt.

Theatre 6: Through Sept. 10: "Diggsdown" (Michael Ritchie), with James Woods, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Bruce Dern. From Sept. 11: "Where the Day Takes You" (Marc Rocco), with Sean Astin, Lara Flynn Boyle, Peter Dinklage, Balthazar Getty, Ricki Lake, James LeGros, and Dermot Mulroney.
Theatre 7: "Rapid Fire" (Dwight H. Little), with Brandon Lee.

EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"Honeymoon in Vegas" (†).

EMBASSY 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "Mo' Money" (Peter Macdonald), with Damon Wayans.

Theatre 2: "Boomerang" (†).

Theatre 3: "Honey, I Blew Up the Kid" (Randal Kleiser), with Rick Moranis, Marcia Strassman, Lloyd Bridges, Robert Oliveri, and John Shea.

ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Pet Sematary Two" (Mary Lambert), with Edward Furlong, Anthony Edwards, Clancy Brown, and Jared Rushton.

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 10: "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Harry Dean Stanton, and Moira Kelly. From Sept. 11: "Sneakers" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Robert Redford, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingsley, River Phoenix,

Sidney Poitier, David Strathairn, and Mary McDonnell.

Theatre 2: "Single White Female" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

Through Sept. 8: "2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968, directed by Stanley Kubrick), with Keir Dullea and Gary Lockwood; and "Full Metal Jacket" (1987, Kubrick), with Matthew Modine, Vincent D'Onofrio, Lee Ermye, Arliss Howard, Dorian Harewood, and Adam Baldwin.

Sept. 9-10: "Slacker" (Richard Linklater); and "The Graduate" (1967, Mike Nichols), with Anne Bancroft, Dustin Hoffman, Katharine Ross, William Daniels, Elizabeth Wilson, and Murray Hamilton.

Sept. 11-12: "Wild at Heart" (1990, David Lynch), with Nicolas Cage, Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Willem Dafoe, Isabella Rossellini, and Harry Dean Stanton; and "9 ½ Weeks" (1986, Adrian Lyne), with Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger.

Sept. 13-15: "Toto le Heros" (Jaco Van Dormael; in French), with Michel Bouquet; and "The 400 Blows" (1959, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre L aud.

From Sept. 16: "Poison" (1989, Todd Haynes); and "Tongues Untied" (1989, Marjane Riggs).

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Sept. 7: "Phantom of the Rue Morgue" (1954, Roy Del Ruth), with Karl Malden, Claude Dauphin, Patricia Medina, and Steve Forrest.

Sept. 8-9: "Plan 9 from Outer Space" (1956, Edward D. Wood, Jr.), with Bela Lugosi; "Night of the Ghouls" (1960, Wood); and "Jail Bait" (1954, Wood), with Lyle Talbot.

Sept. 10-12: "Vampire Hunter D" (1985, Toyoo Ashida); and "Akira" (1989, Katsuhiro Otomo), an animated film.

Sept. 13-14: "The Day the Earth Stood Still" (1951, Robert Wise), with Michael Rennie, Patricia Neal, Hugh Marlowe, Sam Jaffe, and Billy Gray; "The Day the Earth Caught Fire" (1961, Val Guest), with Janet Munro, Leo McKern, and Edward Judd; and "The Day of the Triffids" (1963, Steve Sekely), with Howard Keel, Nicole Maurey, Janette Scott, and Kieron Moore.

Sept. 15-16: "The Maze" (1953, William Cameron Menzies), with Richard Carlson; and "Cat Women of the Moon" (1953, Arthur Hilton), with Sonny Tufts, Victor Jory, and Marie Windsor.

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Sept. 7: "Playtime" (1967) and "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (1953), both directed by, and with, Jacques Tati.

Sept. 8: "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner" (1962, Tony Richardson), with Michael Redgrave and Tom Courtenay; and "Look Back in Anger" (1959, Richardson), with Richard Burton, Claire Bloom, and Mary Ure.

Sept. 9: "Deadline—U.S.A." (1952, Richard Brooks), with Humphrey Bogart, Kim Hunter, and Ethel Barrymore; and "Blackboard Jungle" (1955, Brooks), with Glenn Ford, Anne Francis, and Louis Calhern.
Sept. 10: "Beetlejuice" (1988, Tim Burton), with Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, Michael Keaton, Catherine O'Hara, Sylvia Sidney, Winona Ryder, and Jeffrey Jones; and "Night Shift" (†).

Sept. 11-12: "The Philadelphia Story" (see page 17); and "Bringing Up Baby" (1938, Howard Hawks), with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, and Charles Ruggles.

Sept. 13: "Diabolique" (1955, Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "Panique" (1946, Julien Duviol; in French), with Viviane Romance, Michel Simon, and Paul Bernard.

Sept. 14: "Wild Strawberries" (1957, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Victor S  str  m, Ingrid Thulin, and Gunnar Bj  rnstrand; and "Shame" (†).

Sept. 15: "Slaughterhouse-Five" (1972, George Roy Hill), with Michael Sacks; and "Catch-22" (1970, Mike Nichols), with Alan Arkin.

Sept. 16: "Morning Glory" (1933, Lowell Sherman), with Katharine Hepburn and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.; and "Sylvia Scarlett" (1936, George Cukor), with Hepburn, Cary Grant, Edmund Gwenn, and Brian Aherne.

TRIBECA CINEMA, 41 White St. (925-2570)

Through Sept. 8: "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977, Bu  uel; in French), with Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina; and "The Exterminating Angel"

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

(1962, Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish), with Silvia Pinal.
 Sept. 9-10: "The Condemned of Altona" (1963, Vittorio De Sica), with Sophia Loren, Maximilian Schell, Fredric March, and Robert Wagner; and "Closely Watched Trains" (1966, Jiri Menzel; a Czech film).
 Sept. 11-12: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972, Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider.
 Sept. 13: "Sleeper" (†); and "Bananas" (1971, Woody Allen), with Allen.
 Sept. 14-15: "Paris, Texas" (1984, Wim Wenders), with Harry Dean Stanton, Nastassja Kinski, and Dean Stockwell; and "Woman in the Dunes" (1964, Hiroshi Teshigahara; in Japanese), with Eiji Okada.
 From Sept. 16: "Panique" (1946, Julien Duvivier; in French), with Viviane Romance, Michel Simon, and Paul Bernard; and "Fear" (1956, Roberto Rossellini), with Ingrid Bergman.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Sept. 7 at noon and Sept. 11 at 3: "Young Törless" (1968, directed by Volker Schlöndorff; in German). . . . Sept. 7 at 2:30 and Sept. 11 at 6: "Cleo from 5 to 7" (1962, Agnès Varda; in French), with Corinne Marchand. . . . Sept. 7 at 6 and Sept. 8 at noon: "The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith" (1978, Fred Schepisi). . . . Sept. 8 at 3: "Before the Revolution" (1964, Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian). . . . Sept. 8 at 6: "Exodus" (1960, Otto Preminger), with Paul Newman, Eva Marie Saint, Sal Mineo, Ralph Richardson, and Lee J.

Cobb. . . . Sept. 10 at noon: "Harlan County, U.S.A." (†). . . . Sept. 10 at 3: "Heat and Dust" (1983, James Ivory), with Julie Christie, Greta Scacchi, and Shashi Kapoor. . . . Sept. 10 at 6 and Sept. 11 at noon: "L'Avventura" (1959, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti, Gabriele Ferzetti, and Léa Massari. . . . Sept. 12 at noon: "Hallelujah the Hills" (1963, Adolfo Mekas), with Peter H. Beard. . . . Sept. 12 at 2:30: "Fire Festival" (1989, Mitsuo Yanagimachi; in Japanese). . . . Sept. 12 at 5 and Sept. 14 at 3: "Sweetie" (1990, Jane Campion). . . . Sept. 13 at noon: "Cousin Angelica" (1974, Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with José Luis López Vázquez. . . . Sept. 13 at 2:30: "Hunting Scenes from Bavaria" (1968, Peter Fleischmann); in German, with Martin Speer. . . . Sept. 13 at 5 and Sept. 14 at noon: "The Last Bridge" (1954, Helmut Kautner; in German), with Maria Schell. . . . Sept. 14 at 6 and Sept. 15 at noon: "Ju Dou" (1990, Zhang Yimou; in Mandarin). . . . Sept. 15 at 6: "Pretty Baby" (1978, Louis Malle), with Keith Carradine, Susan Sarandon, Brooke Shields, and Antonio Fargas.

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Sept. 7 at 2 and 6:45 and Sept. 8 at 4:30 and 9: "The Valiant Ones" (1975, King Hu). . . . Sept. 7 at 4:30 and 9 and Sept. 8 at 2 and 6:45: "Five Girls and a Rope" (1991, Yeh Hung-Wei). . . . Sept. 9 at 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10; Sept. 10 at 2, 4, and 6; Sept. 11 at 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10; and Sept. 12 at 4, 6, 8, and 10: "John Lurie and the Lounge Lizards in Berlin" (1991, Garret Linn), a documentary. . . . Sept. 12-13 at 2: "The Little Match Girl" and "The Red Shoes," both animated short films. . . . Sept. 13 at 3:45 and Sept. 14 at 2, 4, and 6: "The Naked Childhood" (1968,

Maurice Pialat; in French). . . . Sept. 13 at 5:30 and Sept. 14 at 8: "The House in the Woods, Parts 1-3" (1971, Pialat; in French). . . . Sept. 13 at 8:45 and Sept. 15 at 8: "The House in the Woods, Parts 4-6." . . . Sept. 15 at 2, 4, and 6, and Sept. 16 at 8:15: "We Won't Grow Old Together" (1972, Pialat; in French). . . . Sept. 16 at 2 and 4: "The Open Mouth" (1974, Pialat; in French).

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077) "American Impressionist: A Robert Altman Retrospective." Sept. 12 at 2: "Beyond Therapy" (1987), with Jeff Goldblum, Julie Hagerty, Tom Conti, and Glenda Jackson. . . . Sept. 12 at 4: "The Room" (1987, ABC), with Linda Hunt, Annie Lennox, and Julian Sands; and "The Dumb Waiter" (1987, ABC), with John Travolta and Tom Conti. . . . Sept. 13 at 1:30: "The Caine Mutiny Court Martial" (1988, CBS), with Eric Bogosian, Brad Davis, and Peter Gallagher. . . . Sept. 13 at 4: "Vincent & Theo" (1990), with Tim Roth and Paul Rhys.

MUSEUM OF TELEVISION AND RADIO, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—"Jim Henson's World of Television." Through Sept. 13: "The Kermit and Piggy Story" (1976-81) and "Kermit and Miss Piggy Guest Appearances" (1976-90). . . . From Sept. 15: "The Storyteller: The Heartless Giant" (1989), "Fraggle Rock: The Minstrels" (1983), and "The Jim Henson Hour: Song of the Cloud Forest" (1989). Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 1. . . . Sept. 15: "The Jim Henson Hour: Monster Maker" (1989) and "Greek Myths: Theseus and the Minotaur" (1989). Showings Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—Sept. 11-12 at 3 and 7: "A Passage to India" (†).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)
BATMAN RETURNS—Tim Burton's sequel to his phenomenally successful 1989 "Batman" doesn't try to top the first picture, either with splashier special effects or with loftier pretensions to significance; nor does it simply go through the motions, repeating the surefire stuff with a self-satisfied air of professionalism. It's a blend of playful novelty and reassuring familiarity—a difficult mixture to get right. This time, the hero (again Michael Keaton) does battle with a greedy businessman named Max Shreck (Christopher Walken) and the roly-poly arch-criminal known as the Penguin (Danny DeVito). And whenever Batman ventures out on one of his nocturnal crime-fighting missions, he runs into a mysterious woman who dresses like a cat and carries a whip. The hilariously twisted relationship between the hero and the Catwoman (Michelle Pfeiffer) plays like an apache dance in animal costumes, and it's the glory of the movie. The cat clothes seem to release something strange and wild in Pfeiffer: her performance is ferociously sexy and uninhibitedly, over-the-top funny. As in the first movie, Burton gives the material a luxurious masked-ball quality and a sly contemporary wit without violating the myth's low, cheesy comic-book origins. He's an artist who's comfortable with both the higher aspirations and the lower instincts of his nature as an entertainer: he and Batman are an ideal match. Screenplay by Daniel Waters; cinematography by Stefan Czapsky; score by Danny Elfman; production design by Bo Welch.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/29/92.) (Criterion Center.)
THE BEST INTENTIONS—It boasts the built-in interest of a script by Ingmar Bergman, dramatizing the courtship and early married life of his parents. Bille August directed, and Jorgen Persson did the cinematography; their square filmmaking has an antique sheen. But they've made an orderly movie about disorderly conduct. At three hours, the drama, about the mismatch between a tormented, self-denying pastor (Samuel Frøler) and a coddled bourgeois woman (Pernilla August), is one prolonged, unrevealing study in frustration. Of course we know that these two won't live happily ever after; they did give birth to Ingmar Bergman. With its inexo-

table depiction of increasing marital woe, this film is the cinematic equivalent of predestination. Except for the expressive Max von Sydow (in the role of Bergman's maternal grandfather), the actors don't operate in a climate of free will; they register carefully prescribed dollops of anguish. In Swedish.—M.S. (7/27/92) (Quad Cinema, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

BLADE RUNNER (1982)—Ridley Scott's futuristic thriller is set in a hellish, claustrophobic city, dark and polluted, and with a continual drenching rainfall—it's Los Angeles in the year 2019. The congested-megalopolis sets are extraordinary: this is the grimy, retrograde future—the future as a black market, made up of scrambled, sordid aspects of the present. A visionary sci-fi movie that has its own look can't be ignored; it has its place in film history. But you're always aware of the sets as sets—it's 1982 back lot. And the movie forces passivity on you. It puts you in this lopsided maze of a city, with its post-human feeling, and keeps you persuaded that something bad is about to happen. Harrison Ford is the blade runner—a police officer who kills "replicants," the powerful humanoids manufactured by genetic engineers, if they rebel against their drudgery in the space colonies and show up on Earth. He tracks down four of these replicants (Brion James; Joanna Cassidy; Daryl Hannah, who has killer thighs and does a punk variation on Olympia, the doll automaton of "The Tales of Hoffmann"); and the blue-eyed scenery chewer Rutger Hauer), but Ford's mission seems of no particular consequence. The whole movie gives you the feeling of not getting anywhere—of being part of the atmosphere of decay. With Sean Young as Rachael and William Sanderson as the toy-maker. From the 1968 novel "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" by Philip K. Dick; adapted by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. The version now showing is said to be more faithful to the director's intentions than the original release was.—P.K. (Village Theatre VII; starting Sept. 11.)

BOB ROBERTS—Tim Robbins is the writer, director, and star of this mock documentary that chronicles, C-SPAN style, the senatorial campaign of a young radical-right demagogue. Bob Roberts is a folksinger: instead of giving speeches, he picks up an acoustic guitar and

invites his audiences to sing along with his reactionary "protest" anthems. He's Pat Buchanan in Woody Guthrie's clothing, and what's scary about the movie is that this grotesque coupling doesn't even feel like a stretch. Robbins works like an inspired political cartoonist: this picture is his chance to have his say on everything that's been bugging him for the past twelve years, and he makes the most of it. He tosses off nasty satiric riffs at a reckless, headlong pace, and the movie, even at its most chilling, is hilarious; its humor is both precise enough to deflate its targets and goofy enough to feel liberating. And his performance as smiling Bob, although it's conceived as a caricature, is never tiresome: it's too finely detailed, and too gleeful. The picture is a down-and-dirty exercise in negative campaigning, and it's bracing to see some mean, memorable zingers coming from the left. Witty, Robbins has appropriated for his own purposes the attack-dog campaign style of the right wing. This terrifically entertaining movie represents something very unlikely and very welcome: liberal humor with sharp teeth. Also with Gore Vidal, Alan Rickman, Giancarlo Esposito, Brian Murray, and Ray Wise. Many familiar performers turn up in juicy cameos: John Cusack, Bob Balaban, Susan Sarandon, Fred Ward, Pamela Reed, Peter Gallagher, James Spader, Helen Hunt, and the country singer Kelly Willis.—T.R. (9/7/92) (Village Theatre VII, and Cinema I. . . . Columbus Circle; through Sept. 10.)

BOOMERANG—Set in a world where entire upscale companies are run by African-Americans, this Eddie Murphy vehicle tries hard to be positive. It's a pity that the movie isn't any good. Murphy is a Manhattan marketing hot shot and ladies' man who ends up working under the woman of his dreams (Robin Givens) when their cosmetics firms merge. She treats him as cavalierly as he treated the previous women in his life; the script hands out one earnest lesson after another, so that he can learn what it feels like to be used. Givens knows how to employ her flashing eyes and chiselled, haughty features for comic effect, but she doesn't get a single clever line. As the gal who strives to save the hero, Halle Berry is so much more accessible than Givens, while being equally pretty, that dramatically there's no contest. Murphy has a



Tracy Lord (Katharine Hepburn), a forbiddingly virtuous rich girl who divorced a drunk, C.K. Dexter Haven (Cary Grant), plans to marry a proper captain of industry, George Kittredge (John Howard). A few sly shenanigans with a scandal-mag reporter named Macaulay Connor (James Stewart) cause her to loosen up, accept human frailty, and switch her allegiance back to Dext. That's the by now familiar plot of M-G-M's 1940 bonanza "The Philadelphia Story" (playing September 11-12, at Theatre 80 St. Marks), one of the most enjoyable high-society frolics of all time. Seeing it again corrects the notion, advanced by recent fantasies like "The Purple Rose of Cairo," that Hollywood's upper-crust forces merely provided less fortunate folk with the chance to transport themselves into a glossy world of leisure. As the self-styled rebel Macaulay finds out, the rich have the same romantic problems as you and I—they just have a freer hand in working them out. The Main Line settings illuminate the dilemma of a woman who can't get off her pedestal. The screenwriter, Donald Ogden Stewart, improves on Philip Barry's play; he gives Dext a larger piece of the action and a stronger case for remarrying Ms. Lord. Grant repays the writer by matching Hepburn's abrasive-to-melting star turn with his own elegant, passion-tinged underplaying.

Some parts of the movie are as fresh as ever—particularly its satire of celebrity journalism and the Luce empire. (Spy magazine took its name from the scandal mag in this movie, and listed Macaulay Connor among its pseudonymous columnists.) Other parts have dated badly. Both play and film were conceived to rehabilitate Hepburn's snooty image, but it's overkill to blame her character for everything from Dext's alcoholism to her father's philandering. Still, the director, George Cukor, does such fine soft-shoe choreography with his cast that they glide over the rough spots.

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couple of peppy scenes with David Alan Grier and Martin Lawrence, who play his best buddies, but a lot of the time he acts unconvincingly modest. The screenplay (by Barry W. Blaustein and David Sheffield), with its constant references to Murphy's sexual magnetism, does all the bragging for him. Padded with manic interludes involving Eartha Kitt, Geoffrey Holder, and Grace Jones; directed by Reginald Hudlin.—M.S. (7/13/92) (19th Street East 6, 86th Street East Twin, and Embassy.)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME—Errol Morris's inspirational documentary essay about the physicist Stephen Hawking is a cross between a puff piece and a gee-whiz science special. The movie is even more abstract than it has to be, and it's remarkably soft-edged. In the biographical sections, Morris sketches Hawking as a wayward boy wonder who focuses his talents only after he's stricken with Lou Gehrig's disease. As far as characterization goes, that's it. There's some curiosity but no depth in the director's depiction of eccentric British intellectuals; he treats his interviewees as if he were pinning them to specimen boards, except that he doesn't name or identify them. As a record of inquiry into black

holes and how they relate to the creation of the cosmos, the picture is one "Eureka!" episode after another. Morris presents Hawking's ironic contrasts between human mortality and the life span of the universe with such hushed awe that he robs them of their delectability. (The familiar ripple of Philip Glass's music doesn't help.) By the end, the film disappears into its own cranium.—M.S. (9/7/92) (Lincoln Plaza.)

DEATH BECOMES HER—If he'd cut it to twenty-six minutes, Robert Zemeckis' duelling-bitch comedy would have been a super episode of the HBO anthology series, "Tales from the Crypt." It stars Meryl Streep as a Broadway-Hollywood diva, Goldie Hawn as her high-school chum, and Bruce Willis as the plastic surgeon they both desire. At its peak, Zemeckis, the cast, and the special-effects team achieve de-luxe variations on the TV show's macabre slapstick. But at a hundred and three minutes, the laughs dribble away. The script, by Martin Donovan and David Koepp, which pivots on an immortality potion, is basically an excuse for Streep and Hawn to wallop each other with the aid of flesh-bending special effects. Too often the lines are witless and the narrative invention

pitiful. The best reason to see the movie is Streep. In this film about women losing control of their bodies, she is more at home in hers than ever before.—M.S. (8/24/92) (34th St. East, Chelsea Cinemas, and Ziegfeld....) 86th Street East Twin. Evenings only....) Baronet; through Sept. 8....) Regency; through Sept. 10.)

DREAMCHILD (1985)—Coral Browne plays Lewis Carroll's Alice in 1932, just before her eightieth birthday, when she sails to New York to speak at the Lewis Carroll centenary celebration at Columbia University. Disoriented by the voyage and exhilarated by New York City, she experiences a second childhood; her mind wanders back to 1862, when the young Reverend Charles Dodgson (Ian Holm), lecturer in mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford, where her father was the dean, had attempted to entertain her and her sisters by spinning his nonsense tale. It's only now, at the commemoration, and with her own death close at hand, that the elderly Alice grasps how deeply tormented he was and that he loved her. And with New York jogging her out of her confining Victorian primness, she sees how narrow her life has been. Written by Dennis Potter and directed by Gavin

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

Millar, the picture suggests a literate TV show rather than a movie; but it's very enjoyable, and in some scenes it achieves levels of feeling that movies rarely get near. The elderly Alice's Potter-esque adventures in the Art Deco New York wonderland wobble in tone, yet the picture is magically smooth, and it's full of felicities. Nothing in Coral Browne's other screen performances suggests the frailty and beauty she brings to her Alice, and Ian Holm's performance is wonderful—sneaky-dirty in its recessiveness, funny and painful at the same moments. With Amelia Shankley as the forthright little Alice at ten, Jane Asher as her mother, Peter Gallagher and Nicola Cowper as young lovers, and six Lewis Carroll-Tenniel creatures, from Jim Henson's Creature Shop. Billy Williams' cinematography has a glowing dreaminess; his lighting helps us over the transitions between 1932 and 1862, and into the glimpses of the world inhabited by these eerie critters.—P.K. (Public Theatre; starting Sept. 11.)

ENCHANTED APRIL—Adapted by Peter Barnes from Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 novel, this period romance has a healthy sprinkling of bewitchments. The lead characters are two proper middle-class English ladies, played by Josie Lawrence and Miranda Richardson, who, partly to get away from their husbands, pool their resources to rent an Italian villa named San Salvatore for a month. They ultimately share expenses with an austere, cultured widow (Joan Plowright) and a gorgeous, bored aristocrat (Polly Walker). Italy awakens the women's sensuality and imagination, and gives them perspective; Lawrence and Richardson end up jolting their deadhead husbands (played by Alfred Molina and Jim Broadbent) back to life. The director, Mike Newell, handles the performers deftly and sympathetically, from the wonderfully ebullient Lawrence and the ravishing Walker to the robustly comical Plowright; Michael Kitchen contributes a tour de force of eccentric charm as the villa's owner. If the film, with its brittle, satiric London scenes and its expansive Italian ones, breaks too distinctly into pieces, the magic of the sunnier locations seals the cracks. The cinematographer, Rex Maidment, captures the enveloping pastoral euphoria of San Salvatore; the movie was shot at the same Mediterranean estate where von Arnim composed her novel.—M.S. (8/10/92) (Angelika Film Cen-

Sarah Jessica Parker lurch from the brink of matrimony to splitsville. James Caan, a pro gambler, shellacks the would-be groom in a welcome-to-Vegas poker game and takes a weekend with Parker as his prize. The movie is about learning how much you want something just when it looks as if you might lose it forever. "Vegas" is also a diverting expression of clashing generational styles. Cage is a nineties boy-man—he's unable to commit. Caan is the traditional manly man who's too willing to take on responsibility. No wonder Parker is puzzled. Bergman makes antic hay out of contemporary confusion, and his cast keeps the romantic triangle spinning like a gyroscope. Cage's amorous anxiety gives the film a charge, Caan epitomizes male hubris, and Parker is a great all-around responder. It's weirdly right that the music of Elvis Presley comments on the action, not only in a Vegas crawling with Elvis impersonators but in Kauai, too. (Willie Nelson sings "Blue Hawaii.") America's pop god of self-creation belongs in a movie about lovers bopping their way to the altar by trial and error. With a risible cameo by Peter Boyle.—M.S. (9/7/92) (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, 62nd & Broadway, and Embassy 1.)

HOWARDS END—James Ivory's movie version of the 1910 E. M. Forster novel is a handsome and intelligent piece of work; a faithful, well-paced, and carefully crafted dramatization of a very good story. The heroine, Margaret Schlegel (Emma Thompson), is a thirtyish Englishwoman of German ancestry who lives with her sister and her brother in a London town house. The plot brings the cultured and rather high-minded Schlegels in contact with a very different sort of family, the Wilcoxes, who appear to represent English values at their most infuriatingly solid and complacent. The emotional core of the movie is the brief, unlikely friendship that develops between Margaret and conservative Ruth Wilcox (Vanessa Redgrave), a woman who inhabits a narrow world so profoundly, and with such enormous feeling, that she transforms it. Redgrave is at her most radiant in this role. And Thompson, whose character is meant to be seen as the heir to Mrs. Wilcox's thoroughly English kind of spirituality, comes through with a thrilling, original performance; she carries the movie. These luminous performances go a long way toward putting Forster's ambitious ideas across on the screen. (Anthony Hopkins, as the no-nonsense businessman Henry Wilcox, is awfully good, too.) The story holds us for the full two hours and twenty minutes that the movie takes to tell it; Ivory and his screenwriter, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, have done a skillful and sensitive job of adaptation. All that's missing, really, is the elusive quality that makes Forster such a brave, moving writer: his constant striving to see beyond the story, to see through it, to transcend it.—T.R. (5/4/92) (Fine Arts.)

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN—Penny Marshall's fictional account of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League has no mind of its own. Marshall directed it with both eyes on the audience. She and the screenwriting team of Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel slap

together a bare-bones narrative (about the league's 1943 debut season) and dress it up with set-piece gags and sentimental ploys. All they want is for people to come out saying that they laughed and they cried. The lead characters are Dottie Hinson (Geena Davis) and her kid sister, Kit Keller (Lori Petty), who catch and pitch, respectively, for the Rockford Peaches and act out their sibling tensions on the baseball diamond and in the locker room. Tom Hanks mugs ingratiatingly as Jimmy Dugan, the Rockford coach and an alcoholic former slugger, and Madonna sashays through the supporting role of All the Way Mae, a ballplayer who tests the league's deportment code. This movie aims for the tear ducts and the funny bone

as ruthlessly as the summer's big action-fantasy hits go after the viscera. It unfolds in field-of-dreams land—complete with cornstalks.—M.S. (7/13/92) (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Festival, and Olympia.)

NIGHT ON EARTH—This anthology film, written and directed by Jim Jarmusch ("Stranger Than Paradise"), has a gimmicky premise. Each of its five stories takes place in a different city, and each is about a taxicab ride. All the trips are going on at the same time, but in different time zones, so there's an illusion of temporal progress: the picture begins at sunset in Los Angeles and ends at dawn in Helsinki. (The intervening episodes take place in New York, Paris, and Rome.) It's a feeble but serviceable conceit; if the sketches were funny, we'd barely notice the preciousness of the structure. Unfortunately, the material is very thin, and the movie doesn't vary its style from sketch to sketch: Jarmusch sticks doggedly to his trademark deadpan manner. The comedian Roberto Benigni, playing a motor-mouth cabbie in the Italian episode, briefly enlivens the picture with a riotous erotic monologue. But, for the most part, the movie induces in the viewer an eerie, suspended feeling that mimics the time-stands-still monotony of a long airplane journey. It tries for a chipper, light-hearted tone, but it gives the audience a gruelling flight—a red-eye to nowhere. In English, French, Italian, and Finnish.—T.R. (5/18/92) (Angelika Film Center.)

NIGHT SHIFT (1982)—This isn't much of a movie but it manages to be funny a good part of the time anyway. The comedian Michael Keaton is a human whirligig with saucer eyes and quizzical eyebrows—the face of a puzzled adolescent satyr. As attendants at the morgue, he and Henry Winkler play off each other very gently. Keaton is part hipster, part innocent lost soul; he's the idea man, and he seems to have all the screwed-up big-city energy in his jive talk and his jiggling movements, but when he has to carry through on any of his schemes he falls apart. That's where the shy, steady nerd Winkler comes in. Though this comedy is based on a newspaper item about two young men who were caught operating a prostitution ring, using a city morgue as their headquarters, it seems wildly improbable, and about two-thirds of the way through, the situations begin to have the TV blahs. Still, Keaton, in his movie debut, is an original, the director, Ron Howard sets up the scenes so that gags can blossom, and there are a lot of attractive performers, especially Shelley Long as a satiric version of the girl next door. Also with Gina Hecht, Bobby De Cicco, and Richard Belzer. From a script by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 10.)

ONE FALSE MOVE—Skillfully performed and well-comely unpredictable, this low-budget crime film, made by actor-turned-director Carl Franklin, starts out as a herky-jerky exploitation piece, then turns into something better. After a jolting series of execution-style killings, a trio of crooks go on the lam from Los Angeles to Star City, Arkansas, where two L.A. lawmen and a local sheriff lie in wait. What saves the opening sequences is the inspired pairing of a black sociopath (Michael Beach) and a white psychopath (played by Billy Bob Thornton, who co-wrote the script with Tom Epperson). Beach's inhuman brilliance and Thornton's edgy earthiness make them deadly companions. Cynda Williams, as Thornton's African-American lover, hits on marvellous combinations of ingenuousness and amorality, even when the script plays peekaboo with motivation. Meanwhile, Star City's sheriff (Bill Paxton) tries to persuade the visiting metropolitan cops (Jim Metzler and Earl Billings) that he's ripe for big-time law enforcement. Paxton lays on the hick ingratiation, but midway through he shows how this good ole boy grows into a good ole man. Like Paxton, the movie improves as it goes along; it leaves hokum as well as wholesale carnage far behind.—M.S. (7/27/92) (Village Theatre VII, and Sutton.)

A PASSAGE TO INDIA (1984)—This admirable version of E. M. Forster's 1924 novel about the tragicomedy of British colonial rule was adapted, directed, and edited by David Lean, who knew how to do pomp and the moral hideousness of empire better than practically anybody else around. He enlarges the scale of Forster's irony, and the characters live in more sumptuous settings than we



Daryl Hannah, Sean Young, Harrison Ford, and Rutger Hauer in "Blade Runner"

ter, and 84th Street Sixplex.... Cinema II; through Sept. 10.)

HARLAN COUNTY, U.S.A. (1977)—A documentary with a great subject, and with the taste and sensitivity not to betray it. The director, Barbara Kopple, went to live among the coal miners of Harlan County, Kentucky, when they went out on strike in 1973. This film is about an underdog group with its own folk culture, based on the unending struggle with "the owners."—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 10.)

HONEYMOON IN VEGAS—A comic zephyr that tickles the back of your neck as it whisks by. Andrew Bergman's ninety-five-minute screwball idyll zigs and zags from New York to Las Vegas to Hawaii as Nicolas Cage and

WAR'S PROFILE:



IN BRIEF—Cont'd

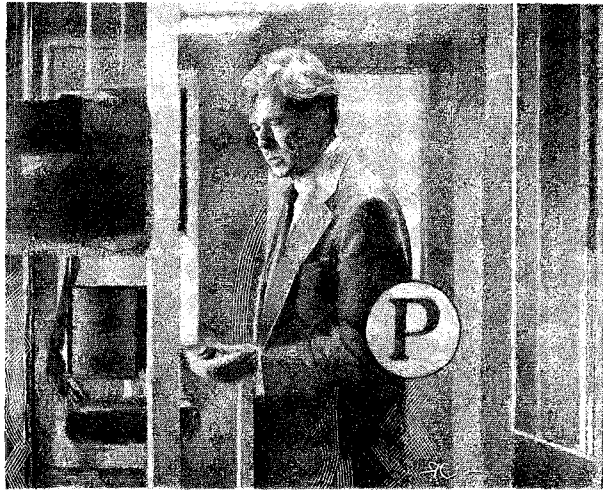
might have expected. But they do live. Peggy Ashcroft comes through with a transcendent piece of acting as Mrs. Moore, and Judy Davis is close to perfection as the repressed Miss Quested, who longs for adventure; they are the two women whose attempt to get to know the Indians socially results in a charge of attempted rape against Dr. Aziz, played by Victor Banerjee, a fine, fluid actor who's like a piece of erotic sculpture. If Lean's technique is to simplify and to spell everything out in block letters, this kind of clarity has its own formal strength. It may not be the highest praise to say that a movie is orderly and dignified or that it's like a well-cared-for, beautifully oiled machine, but of its kind this "Passage to India" is awfully good, until the last half hour or so. Having built up to the courtroom drama, Lean isn't able to regain a narrative flow when it's over; the emotional focus is gone, and the concluding scenes wobble all over the place. With the exception of Alec Guinness (whose caricature of an inscrutable Brahmin is simply in the wrong movie), the cast is just about impeccable. It includes James Fox as the dogged liberal Fielding and Nigel Havers as Ronny, and also Art Malik, Michael Culver, Saeed Jaffrey, Roshan Seth, and Sandra Hotz as Stella. Cinematography by Ernest Day; music by Maurice Jarre; production design by John Box. (2 hours and 43 minutes.)—P.K. (Metropolitan Museum of Art; Sept. 11-12.)

THE PLAYER—The title character of Robert Altman's new movie is a young Hollywood studio executive named Griffin Mill (Tim Robbins), who, for no very good reason, murders an aspiring screenwriter. The picture is a brilliant dark comedy about the death of American filmmaking. It's like a documentary about a mirage: the world it shows us is sunlit and shimmering, and the people have the thin presence of holograms. Altman is doing one of his specialties here—exploring an odd American subculture—and when his idiosyncratic realism is applied to the insular, constantly self-regarding community of Hollywood "players" it has an almost hallucinatory effect. The movie has the exhilarating nonchalance of the director's seventies classics, and its tone is volatile, elusive: with breathtaking assurance, it veers from psychological thriller suspense to goofball comedy to icy satire. Altman turns the self-reflective world of Hollywood into a fun house in which every grotesque distortion somehow appears to us as a newly discovered, paradoxical truth. Robbins gives a layered, richly suggestive performance—the sort of performance that Altman's style, at its best, produces without obvious effort. At sixty-seven, Altman still seems like the youngest filmmaker in America.—T.R. (4/20/92) (Village East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Cinema 3.)

RAISING CAIN—Brian De Palma has created a convoluted black comedy about an unhinged child psychologist, played by John Lithgow. He is obsessive about the upbringing of his little daughter, and approaches breakdown at roughly the same time that his wife (Lolita Davidovich) falls into the arms of her ex-boyfriend (Steven Bauer). De Palma is devil-may-care about subjects that are usually treated with deathly seriousness, and he's audacious in his dislocation effects, turning what are normally flaws in a thriller—withholding information and jumping ahead of the plot—into narrative ruses that take the ground out from under a viewer's feet. But some of these flaws remain flaws. And the movie, for all its goofiness, lacks the soul of abandon that helped make De Palma's earlier suspense films wild sprees. The only way to enjoy the film is to identify not with the characters but with De Palma himself, as he raises and confounds expectations, and scatters bits of other movies (especially Michael Powell's "Peeping Tom") into a headlong pastiche. De Palma heaps everything on except his sensibility; it's like the shoot-the-works special at a pizza joint. In the best scenes, Lithgow (who plays multiple roles), Gregg Henry, Tom Bower, Barton Heyman, and Frances Sternhagen spark off each other with the casual, skit-comic humor that De

Palma mastered more than twenty years ago.—M.S. (8/24/92) (Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

SHAME (1968)—Ingmar Bergman's simple, masterly vision of normal war and what it does to survivors. Set a tiny step into the future, the film has the inevitability of a dream. Liv Ullmann is superb in the demanding central role—one that calls for emotional involvements with her husband (Max von Sydow) and her lover (Gunnar Björnstrand). One of



Robert Redford in "Sneakers"

Bergman's greatest films, this is one of the least known. Cinematography by Sven Nykvist. In Swedish.—P. K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 14.)

SINGLE WHITE FEMALE—The movie collapses so thoroughly into its promising introduction and its Grand Guignol conclusion that the audience exits muttering about stupidity and waste. Mainly, what's wasted is the talent of two fresh, still-growing stars, Bridget Fonda and Jennifer Jason Leigh, in the roles of twentyish out-of-towners scrambling to survive in New York City. Leigh answers Fonda's ad for a roommate and immediately charms her way into a rent-controlled Upper West Side apartment. Virtually from the start you guess that Leigh's character plans to become Fonda's identical twin. It's merely a matter of time before this unformed young lady tries on Fonda's clothes, bearing, and hairdo, and wipes out any competition for Fonda's attention. The actresses are compelling; Leigh is particularly adept at furtive, inchoate emotions. But when the climax of a movie is inevitable, the director shouldn't delay it as long as Barbet Schroeder does. The movie is mostly just a tiresome tease.—M.S. (8/24/92) (Village Theatre VII, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin. . . .) Bay Cinema; through Sept. 10.)

SISTER ACT—Whoopi Goldberg stars as a Reno lounge singer on the lam from her murderous mobster ex-lover (Harvey Keitel). Disguised as a nun in a San Francisco convent, she manages to bring new music into the choir, fresh street faces into the pews, and a social-activist spirit into the revitalized congregation. The plot and the characters are almost insultingly perfunctory (the pseudonymous Joseph Howard is credited with the script), and when there isn't any rock on the soundtrack the moviemaking is listless. Still, the director, Emile Ardolino, who made "Dirty Dancing," knows how to use sixties hits for an over-all bounce that jumps audiences past dead patches. Goldberg maintains her gruff tone, which helps keep the film from stagnating with sappiness. If Maggie Smith glowers ineffectually as the Mother Superior, a couple of actresses—Kathy Najimy and Mary Wickes—imbue their nun roles with the euphoria of inspired farceurs. (Najimy defines "overjoyed.") The film isn't a divine comedy, and it's not satisfyingly profane either. But it generates a few laughs. It's got a good beat, and you can dance to it.—M.S. (6/15/92) (Village East Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

SLEEPER (1973)—A modern slapstick-comedy classic, directed by and starring Woody Allen. Set two hundred years in the future, it's the

most stable and sustained of his comedies, with a clean visual style and an elegant design. It's a very even work, with no thudding bad lines and no low stretches, but it doesn't have the loose, manic highs of some of his other films. You laugh all the way through and come out smiling and happy, but you're not driven crazy—not really turned on the way his messier movies can turn you on. With Diane Keaton and John Beck. Written by Allen and Marshall Brickman. The music is by Woody Allen with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Band.—P.K. (Tribeca Cinema; Sept. 13.)

A STRANGER AMONG US—At least there's the kick of hearing piping-voiced Melanie Griffith refer to the Cabala as "that Jewish Kama Sutra." Griffith plays a New York cop who goes undercover in the Hasidic community to investigate a murder. She moves into the household of the Rebbe (Lee Richardson), befriends his adopted daughter (Mia Sara), and comes on to his adopted son (Eric Thal). Apart from deflecting the proposals of her hospitalized boyfriend-partner (Jamey Sheridan) and the propositions of her aggressive replacement partner (John Pankow), she doesn't do much; detective work hardly enters into Robert J. Avrech's script. There aren't even any red herrings—certainly not kosher ones, since the filmmakers share the Hasidim's view of their community as a peaceable kingdom. The director, Sidney Lumet, abetted by the cinematographer, Andrzej Bartkowiak, relentlessly aestheticizes the world of his fathers. Griffith's artless embodiment of the script's deranged idea of tough-gumption isn't as amusing as it should be. She's a B-picture heroine stuck in an absurdly self-conscious prestige project.—M.S. (7/27/92) (Village East Cinemas. . . .) East 85th Street; through Sept. 10, evenings only.)

UNFORGIVEN—Set in eighteen-eighties Kansas and Wyoming, this engrossing, moody Western is the sixteenth film Clint Eastwood has directed, and by far the best. The canny script, by David Webb Peoples, revives the old story about the retired gunfighter (Eastwood) who picks up his firearms again for one last score. But there's no easy resolution, and the movie is stronger because of its loose ends: the filmmakers acknowledge that the bloody chaos of an outlaw's life can't be settled in two hours and eleven minutes. The action begins when a cowboy slashes the face of a prostitute, and her co-workers pool their money to offer a reward for the murder of him and his partner. Jaimz Woolvett is the upstart who enlists Eastwood in the bounty hunt. Morgan Freeman plays Eastwood's long-time partner, Gene Hackman a megalomaniac sheriff, Richard Harris a flamboyant English gunslinger, and Saul Rubinek a dime novelist. This is the finest set of performances ever to grace a Clint Eastwood movie, and this time Eastwood even does a good job directing Eastwood. Every bullet in this movie matters; under its leathery hide is a genuine compulsion to de-romanticize Western gunfighting.—M.S. (8/10/92) (Movie-land 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

WHISPERS IN THE DARK—The writer-director, Christopher Crowe, grapples feebly with women's sexual desires. The heroine is a shrink, played by Annabella Sciorra, and the plot is tinged with topicality: Sciorra dates and beds a ruggedly handsome aviator (Jamey Sheridan) who happens to be connected to one of her patients—a voluptuous woman named Eve (Deborah Unger). In therapy, Eve details increasingly dangerous episodes of bondage, and her stories get Sciorra so hot that she goes back into therapy herself, with her university mentor, Alan Alda. The movie's pompous trappings make its inept, desperate attention-grabbing stand out. Crowe flubs maneuvers that true horror directors know instinctively, like how to stage the heroine braining a man and not provoke the wrong kind of laughter. Unger is a good actress and a ripe sexual presence. Seasoned moviegoers will be able to spot Crowe's ace in the hole just from reading the credits.—M.S. (8/24/92) (19th Street East 6. . . .) Orpheum VII, and Worldwide Cinemas. Evenings only.)

DEWAR'S PROFILE:

Leslie Hindman

BORN:

Chicago, Illinois. "Addlin' town.
Up and running more like it."

AGE:

57

PROFESSION:

Founder and President,
Leslie Hindman Auctioneers and
Salvage One (a source of
architectural artifacts).

HOBBY:

Growing orchids. "It's refreshing to
work with something that blooms on
the surface and not under a million
layers of varnish."

LAST BOOK READ:

"Lost in the Funhouse," John Barth.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Doing the only thing she could do
with a Van Gogh found in
Milwaukee. Selling it for \$1.4 million.

WHY I DO WHAT I DO:

"Ever since I can remember, I've had
two favorite places in a house: the
attic and the basement."

QUOTE:

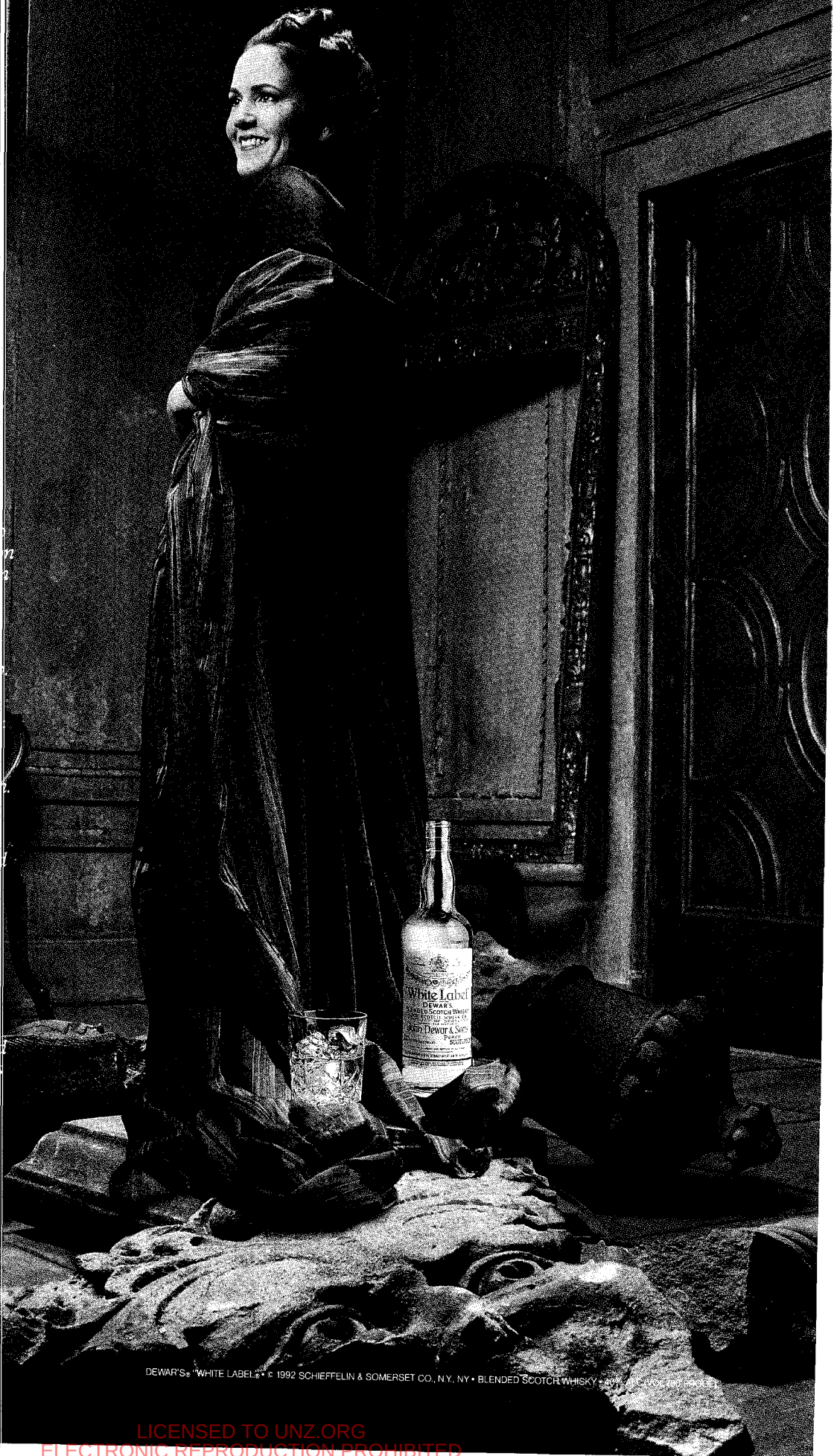
"The junkman cometh."

PROFILE:

Energetic, persuasive, and committed
to selling most anything that comes
her way. The kind of person who
would, and did, auction off the
remains of Comiskey Park.

HER SCOTCH:

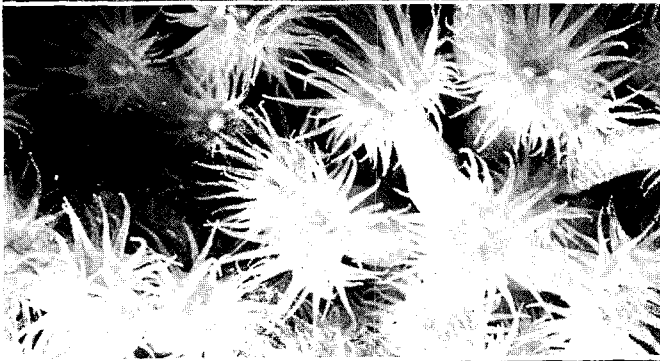
Dewar's "White Label," with water.
"I don't need an expert to give me
an appraisal; I know this is it."



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A MIDDLE-AGED man we know writes:

I suppose that as long as there have been children and plates, parents have been urging the former to clean the latter. The wisdom of this insistence is probably as questionable as its efficiency. Right now, I'm sure, a pop psychologist somewhere with a gleam in his eye and an advance in his pocket is at work on the soon-to-be best-seller "The Overstuffed Inner Child," which will explain that American families are dysfunctional because American parents are force-feeding their children. But, dysfunction aside, this insistence on plate-cleaning has led to a succession of invocations-by-guilt that are engraved on the heart of every middle-class American child and are a part of our common memory: Eat your food, kid, because another child in another place is hungry.

When I was small, my parents' point of reference was the Armenians—a carryover from their own childhood. "Clean your plate," I was told. "Think of the starving children in Armenia." And I did—until, somewhere along the line, the starving children of Armenia were replaced by the starving children of China. With the years, the guilt-inducing locus kept on changing. Right after the Second World War, American children ate—hard as it may be to believe, in these days when twenty dollars will scarcely get you a croissant and a sneer in Paris—on behalf of the starving children of Europe. Then, as the fifties and sixties rolled on, and I had children

of my own, the roster of the less fortunate changed to the Bangladeshis, the Cambodians, the Eastern Europeans, and the Ethiopians, among others. Just recently, the Romanian orphans have had their turn.

In each case, what parents were resorting to was not a formula-ridden nag—or, anyway, not just a formula-ridden nag. It was a nag with a vision attached—a vision of the special place of America. No matter what group of hungry children was being invoked, the point remained the same. Don't take our country for granted, our parents were trying to tell us (and we were trying to tell our children, and they, in turn, to tell theirs), for our abundance is not just the accidental good fortune of geography and climate but a privilege that falls to people who are lucky enough to live in a free and well-ordered society. We were better off than children elsewhere not only because God had given us more than he had given them but also because we lived under a sane, equitable government and they did not. Our abundance was, in some almost mystical way, connected to our freedom; your plate was full because your country was virtuous. What we were praising was not so

much the luck of American agriculture as, to put it coldly, the rationality of American distribution: there is plenty to go around, everybody has some, and your bit is right there on your plate—don't take it for granted.

Then, the other day, observing a young mother engaged in the eternal plate-cleaning war with a seven-year-old, I heard her strike a new note. "Eat your dinner," she said. "Think of the homeless." It's a small thing, I know, but it had a big effect on me. For the homeless she had in mind were literally just outside the door. It was no longer a case of Americans being asked to count themselves lucky compared with people somewhere else; it was a case of one class of Americans being told to count their blessings compared with another class of Americans. Hungry people were part of the landscape the child was growing up in. The impossible had happened: we had become our own Armenia.

Waiting

WE were surprised to learn recently that South African Airways had set up a small detention center in the Travelodge hotel near LaGuardia Airport, and that about forty Somali, Afghan, Chinese, and Indian people were living there and spending their days playing games, watching TV, and walking through the halls. S.A.A.'s "guests," along with some from several other airlines, were seeking political asylum. They had all arrived on flights headed for destinations outside the United States, disembarked at Kennedy, and



said that they'd rather stay in New York than go on. The Immigration and Naturalization Service, which is short of detention space, says that it's the airlines' job to hold on to these passengers until their petitions for asylum are resolved—a process that can take nine or ten months. The airlines aren't happy about the situation, and have complained, most notably in a lawsuit against the I.N.S., about the high cost of confining passengers; in addition to the millions they've spent feeding and housing such people, the airlines say, they've spent more than two million dollars this year on round-the-clock guards to make sure that none of the TWOVs—that is, transit-without-visa passengers—jump out of a window or otherwise escape.

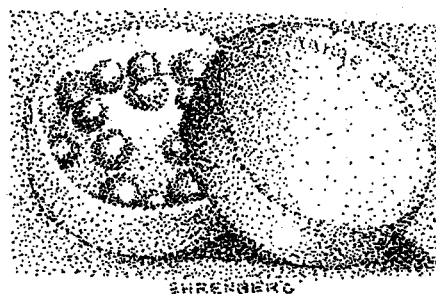
When we arranged to visit the Travelodge the other day, we were informed that all the original detainees had done just that. Presumably, they had headed for Canada, which is said to have a more lenient policy toward asylum seekers. We were referred to a nearby motel, the Westway Motor Inn, and there we met a Somali family that had been incarcerated since June in Room 311. "We just sit and watch TV," said a nineteen-year-old, who, with her twenty-one-year-old sister and their mother, had fled from the civil war in Mogadishu. (They left behind a brother, who had disappeared when the fighting broke out.) "I like soap operas," she told us, through a translator, "and my sister likes music shows." Her mother added, "We go to bed late, so we won't wake up until late." They have breakfast at twelve, sometimes spaghetti, sometimes hamburgers. "It's very good," the younger sister said. The maid comes at one; she changes the sheets every second day. They wash their own clothes, in the bathroom sink. Sometimes they stand at the window, which affords an excellent view of the parking lot. They're allowed to look out the window, but they can't open it. If they try, one of two security guards stationed inside the room at all times will stop them.

"Sure it's embarrassing," said one of the guards, a young man wearing a Malcolm X baseball cap and sitting in a white Naugahyde swivel chair. "They want to be private. We try to stay back here, as close to the door as we can."

"Definitely, we like it better here than in Somalia," the nineteen-year-old said, and she described how, during the first twenty days of the war, the three of them had to hide under their beds while soldiers looted their house; then they walked to Kenya, spent nine months in a refugee camp, escaped in a truck filled with goats and pigs, and made their way to Johannesburg. From there, with help from a sister in California, they bought S.A.A. tickets to Jamaica, via New York. The sisters told us all this in the slightly bored tone we've come to associate with people who have spent three months in a small hotel room. "I'd like to go for a walk," the younger daughter said when we asked what she'd do if she were released. The older one said, "I'd play some basketball." Both said they'd like to learn English.

We said goodbye to the prisoners in Room 311 and headed down the hall to Room 303, where ten Chinese detainees—four women, six men—were having what seemed like a big slumber party. The TV was blaring, and these TWOVs were busy playing cards, eating cornflakes, and generally whooping it up. "They look like kids, but they're grown people, all over twenty years old," we were told by one of four guards stationed outside the room. He explained that the people in Room 303 are Delta's responsibility, and that because that airline has its own policy they enjoy privileges denied the Somalis; they are free, for example, to wander down the hall and buy Cokes from the vending machine. And, though the men and the women are confined in separate rooms at night, they are allowed to fraternize in one room or the other during the day. "Normally, we guard luggage," another guard said, and he added that watching suitcases was a lot easier than watching people.

As we left, the Chinese detainees, in a noisy procession led by a young woman in a lacy blouse and party



shoes, followed us into the hall and clamored for our attention. Without a Chinese-speaking translator, we didn't know exactly what they were saying, but they seemed very glad to see us. One young man pointed to his heart and motioned toward an empty hotel room. "That's Tomorrow," one of the guards said brightly. "We call him that because 'tomorrow' is the only English he knows, other than 'excuse me.'"

We explored further. In Room 319 we found a dour-faced S.A.A. security guard assigned to keep watch over a Lebanese man, who, we learned, had recently gone mad. The guard wouldn't comment, but we were later told that the Lebanese man had made three attempts to escape, and that after the last one he had begun to shake and make strange sounds at odd intervals throughout the day.

We passed Room 311 on our way out, and saw that the occupants had resumed their TV watching; the sisters were sprawled on top of the faded red spread on their bed, the mother was in her bed, and the two guards were swivelling in their chairs. Carroll Lucht, an attorney who represents the Somalis, met us in the lobby. He told us that his clients probably wouldn't be granted asylum. "That would pose a dilemma," he said. "I could appeal, but an appeal could mean they'd spend three or four more years upstairs."

Return Engagement

"WHAT people don't realize about Marilyn Monroe is that she really loved New York," Gene London said to us the other day while he was setting up a spotlight in an empty storefront at 650 Fifth Avenue. "Marilyn lived in New York when she was taking acting classes with Lee Strasberg, and she loved to stroll down Fifth Avenue and window-shop late at night. I saw her once, with beauty cream on her face, looking into the window of a shop on Third Avenue. I wanted to talk to her, but I couldn't—I was too shy."

For the legions of other admirers who wanted to approach Marilyn Monroe but couldn't, Mr. London, a fashion designer and collector, has created a belated valentine to the star, who died thirty years ago. On the ground floor of the Piaget Building, he

has assembled a Marilyn shrine, which will be there until September 15th. From a block away, you can see a fugitive wisp of white skirt blowing in a breeze. The skirt belongs to a life-size mannequin of Marilyn, standing, lips parted, and gazing into the distance with that instantly recognizable look of soft astonishment. It's a reenactment of the famous subway-grate scene from "The Seven Year Itch," with a hidden fan keeping the skirt permanently aloft.

Behind the mannequin is a huge painting of Marilyn's head and torso, her enormous eyelashes downswapt, her red lips open in a croon. The painting is flanked by two other life-size mannequins, these wearing costumes from "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." One of them is in a rendition of the floor-length fuchsia silk gown from Marilyn's number "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend." Outfitted with arm-length fuchsia gloves, and covered with rhinestone jewelry, the mannequin holds aloft a bunch of glittering necklaces and moves her head back and forth. The other mannequin wears a copy of the sleeveless gold lamé dress that in the film was seen only for a moment, and from the back, because it was thought too daring. (Marilyn was sewn into it again for the *Photoplay* awards.) This figure revolves slowly, with upraised arms, showing off to full advantage a neckline slit to the waist and a fully exposed back.

Gene London, as befits the creator of these mannequins, is debonair even when he is wearing—as he was that day, in the heat of creation—a coral-colored tank top and plaid shorts. He has graying wavy hair and wears half-glasses on a cord. "You know, I think of this as my gift to New York," he told us. "This is a magic space. I like to take dead spaces and make them into living windows. I met the people from the 650 Fifth Avenue Company when I was hired, along with many others,



"Just give me a minute, Mr. Vice-President, and I'll try to explain the difference between contributions to the Nature Conservancy and greens fees."

to do a light-and-costume display on the second floor of this building. I lent them some mannequins and Victorian clothing. After the display was over, I went to the company and told them my dream—to create the ultimate tourist attraction. Everyone in this city is a tourist, but no one has the time to actually sightsee. With my window, people can pass by and there it is."

Mr. London himself owns several items of Marilyn's clothing, including the lace top and black satin skirt she wore in "Bus Stop"—which Madonna borrowed for her "Truth or Dare" poster. He told us that he began collecting clothes during an eighteen-year stint as the host of a children's television show, "The Gene London Show," in Philadelphia. "We were on the air seven days a week, and twice on Sundays," he said. "I would make things with the kids and sing with them and do dramatizations of everything from the Bible to fairy tales. And I would have guest stars on the show, so that the kids could ask them questions. Lucille Ball appeared on my show, and Mary Tyler Moore, and Kirk Douglas. And they would

all give me things they had worn." The collection now includes Jeanette MacDonald's chiffon gown, trimmed with sequins and ostrich feathers, from "San Francisco"; Greta Garbo's black velvet two-piece day dress from "Anna Karenina"; and a "cinema satin" cream-colored dance dress made by Lanvin for Gloria Swanson.

Another of Mr. London's favorite stars was Joan Crawford. "I bought something of hers in a thrift shop in New York, and when she came to Philadelphia I asked her to sign the hem," he said. "She told me that it actually wasn't one of her dresses, and promised to send a real Crawford to me. A few days later, I got in the mail a three-piece hostess outfit—a black crêpe jumpsuit, like Catwoman's. It was long enough to fit me, and had a cape made of black chiffon petals. I wrote her a letter saying thank you, and asking her to send me her bra, her galoshes—I had a whole list. Then I got a call at nine o'clock one morning: 'Gene? Joan.' That was the beginning of a long friendship. She was a dear, sweet woman—so dear, so sweet, so nuts. She used to do this exercise where she'd pretend to be a man, and

act as if she were picking up barbells with both arms."

After his TV show ended, in 1977, Mr. London devised what he calls "travelling fashion shows"—revues that tour particular regions of the country and draw on local models and talent. "We do one show that we call 'The Search for Scarlett,' centering on that year—1939, which was a *great* year for fashion," he said. "I show the gowns of the various stars who tried out for Scarlett—Bette Davis, Katharine Hepburn, Susan Hayward—and the audience applauds for the star it likes the most. I made the costume prizes for Ted Turner when he organized the fiftieth anniversary of 'Gone with the Wind.' I wanted so badly to keep those costumes that I cried all the way back on the plane. In 1939, the real search for Scarlett was an inside joke—no one actually expected to find a Southern unknown to play the role. But the women of today are much more sophisticated than the average woman of 1939—today's women *know* wild hair, false eyelashes, padded bras."

Mr. London also does a show that he calls "Hollywood Blondes," tracing the evolution of influences on Marilyn—"from Jean Harlow to Betty Grable to Lana Turner, and then, finally, came Marilyn Monroe herself." He has toured in this show with Katie

LaBourdette, who he says is the best female Marilyn. (He adds, "Jimmy James also does a great Marilyn, but he's a man.") In conjunction with the show he often holds a seminar on the Hollywood eyebrow, in which he describes how the ideal Hollywood face changed over time and how each of the show's stars—Harlow, Grable, Turner, Monroe—reproportioned her features with makeup.

"Marilyn was her own creation," Mr. London told us dreamily. "She didn't just happen—she had to practice. She painted her mouth far beyond its natural lines. She had her nose bobbed, her chin done. But she came up with her own walk, her whole persona. She could walk down the street and be just another girl or she could walk down the street and be Marilyn."

When we dropped by to see Marilyn early the other evening, there was a constant flow of passersby jockeying for glimpses of Gene London's windows. A group of camera-laden tourists took turns snapping photographs of each other in front of the display. A young man zoomed in and said crossly, to no one in particular, "Where's her bust? I don't see her bust!" Then a couple sauntered up, hand in hand, and gazed at the three mannequins. "Well, what do you know?" the man

said to his companion. "Marilyn's made it back to the asphalt jungle."

Spiel Mich

WE had tickets to a Neil Diamond concert—two tickets—and a friend told us that the only other person he knew who had ever had tickets to a Neil Diamond concert was his friend Jack. We called Jack and asked if he wanted to go with us, and we have to say that nobody could have given a more enthusiastic response to an invitation: "I Am . . . I Said! 'Sweet Caroline'—the part that goes, 'hands touchin' hands, reachin' out, touchin' me, touchin' you!' There's a third party there, get it? And 'Play Me,' and 'Cracklin' Rosie.' Anything that builds, I love. 'Cherry, Cherry,' 'Holly Holy.'" We realized that we knew most of the words to every song on Jack's list, and, we admit it, we felt a little embarrassed about that, so afterward we called some other people to hear what they thought about Neil Diamond.

Woman in Beverly Hills: "Neil Diamond? Oh God, my old black Buick with the top down, on Coldwater Canyon. It was, you know, easy, blasting it. It was secret driving music—that Route 66 beat, Pacific Coast Highway, 'I Am . . . I Said.'"

Emergency-room doctor: "I went to a woman psychiatrist for many, many years, and she had all of Neil Diamond's tapes tucked away under her chair, and a little Walkman tucked under there, too. I couldn't see up her dress, but I could see *that*. Now I leave his songs on the radio. 'Cracklin' Rosie,' 'Song Sung Blue'—I leave them on."

A young novelist: "My girlfriend Fizzy and I would bomb around in her jeep years ago with three or four shoeboxes of eight-track tapes, all of them Neil Diamond, in Nova Scotia. We were in a Communist work camp."

The filmmaker Albert Brooks, who, as a comic, used to open for Neil Diamond: "I met him in Jackson, Mississippi, at a college there. He had 'Cherry, Cherry' then. It was before 'I Am . . . I Said'—it was way before. He was *very* nice. He was *nice*. I mean, he was awake



"English lit—how about you?"

during the show, as opposed to the others."

Gardner McKay, who starred in the late-nineteen-fifties television series "Adventures in Paradise," called us back, from Hawaii, and sang the first three bars of "Sweet Caroline" to our answering machine.

Fortified, we went with Jack and twenty thousand other people to the Neil Diamond "Love in the Round" concert at Madison Square Garden. Jack proved to be knowledgeable as well as obsessive, and was able to tell us that Neil Diamond is fifty-one years old and has nineteen platinum albums and twenty-six gold albums. A big, frizzy-haired woman in a flowered blouse sitting in front of us turned around and said, "He's sold ninety million records. *Ninety million.*" Then Neil Diamond climbed onto a revolving stage in a huge puff of smoke. He looked a little like Ben Gazzara. He sang a song we didn't recognize instantly. "If he doesn't sing all the ones I like, I'll get nasty," said Jack. "I went to see Petula Clark in Los Angeles in 1967 and she didn't sing 'Downtown.'" Mr. Diamond sang "Hello Again." A couple sitting across the aisle from us, both of them hefty and sobbing, were watching through binoculars. Mr. Diamond looked taller than we had imagined him to be, and the way he moved his legs when he sang—they're long, and they seemed sexy—was a surprise. People around us were relentlessly swooning and swaying, and by the end Mr. Diamond had sung all Jack's favorites.

A few days later, we decided to meet with Mr. Diamond. In his hotel room, he sat in a straight chair with a champagne-colored pillow behind his back. He has hazel eyes and big eyebrows, and his hair, which is a graying brown, is longish and swept back. He was wearing thin-rimmed glasses, a blue work shirt, blue jeans, brown moccasins, and no socks.

"What are you writing down?" he asked.

We told him.

"I knew I should have worn socks," he said.

"What kind of room were you in when you wrote 'I Am . . . I Said'?" we asked. Mr. Diamond took off his glasses and held them in his left hand. He has long, elegant fingers. "I was doing a screen test for the movie ver-



"If you think Columbus is steamed, wait till you run into Harry Truman."

sion of the Lenny Bruce story. Lenny Bruce's mother was there. I was really depressed. They hadn't told me they were testing five other guys, and those guys all looked like Lenny Bruce and they all spoke like Lenny Bruce. One guy was just out of a mental hospital, where he *was* Lenny Bruce. But I did the test anyway, and when I took a break for lunch I started writing 'I Am . . . I Said.'

"What were you wearing?"

"Maybe Lenny Bruce clothes. I don't know. It was a long time ago."

We asked Mr. Diamond what it was like to perform on foreign tours, when the audience didn't know the words to his songs.

"But they do know," he said. "English is almost a universal language, and they all know the words to the songs. They've been listening for a long time, and they do know. I use a few of the native words sometimes. It's not 'Play Me,' it's 'Spiel Mich.'"

"What does it feel like up there on the stage?"

"What does it feel like? It feels like 'I better remember the next line of the lyric'—that's what it feels like. And that's mostly what I think about—remembering the last line of the lyric and not falling into one of the pits on the stage or falling off the stage. If you

want to be in show business, don't fall off the stage, and remember what your next line is."

Mr. Diamond's speaking voice is low and gravelly. It was a comfort to hear him talk—strangely like listening to the radio.

We asked him if he was going to be performing when he was sixty.

"Maybe sixty. Between sixty-five and seventy, I'm not sure. I'll have to write a lot of ballads now, very slow ballads, very slow songs. Bob Dylan told me, 'Don't write songs with a lot of words in them, because when you get older you just got to sing a lot of words.'"

"Is it weird to be in people's blood-streams?"

"I don't know if it's weird, but I've got so many letters over the years, about this song or that song, from the weirdest places. You know, heart surgeons—'Dear Neil, thank you again. We play "Jonathan Seagull" through each of our bypass operations and we love it.' I mean, you know, music goes on and people's lives go on. Anywhere there's a radio, people have heard of me. You can't get away. Everybody has a different story. People come up to me—it happens all the time—and they say, 'Neil, we conceived our baby to your album.'"

CHEKHOV IN SONDRIO



I have enlarged some early Russian postcards, and looking at them one enters into that world—just before our birth—a most attractive and comprehensible time, with people in uniform, military or school or workers, dogs, horses, a *chainaya*, a printer's on the second floor, a man in a long overcoat walking with hands clasped behind him.

—Letter to the author from Saul Steinberg.

I
IN Milan many years ago, among the trees of our "Summer Garden," there was a Russian *isba* (a log house). I remember the great logs of dark wood, the veranda, where an old maidservant (perhaps I am getting this mixed up with Gogol) welcomed guests with a deep bow. It was not far from the zoo, where a Siberian wolf paced continually from one corner to the other of its cage, hoping obstinately to find a hole through which to go out into the steppe of Milan. A crow landed on the meadow and, as Chekhov says, "before planting itself on its feet, leaped a few times. . . ."

The *isba* is no longer there. The proprietor, Paolin (Pasenka)—may God grant him eternal peace—is no longer there, either. The nephew of Pasenka, having succeeded his uncle, demolished the *ruskaya isba*—the wood had rotted—and built in its place a kiosk lacking any Russian character and, in general, any character at all.

"Vodka," said Bulgakov's Professor Filip Filipovich Preobrazhenski—who succeeded in transforming a mongrel

dog into a proletarian by transplanting into him the pituitary gland of a strolling balalaika player—"must be ninety proof, not eighty." On his antipasto table (which, according to Russian custom, precedes the lunch table), in spite of the restrictions of the moment (the NEP), there were always three different bottles of vodka. He was one of those who "can distinguish, with their eyes blindfolded, the vodka of Koshelyov from Smirnov No. 21."

I leaned on the bar of the kiosk. "A Georgian vodka, *batiushka*."

Georgian vodka is the vodka of Stalin; it cuts off your legs and makes you feel sparks bursting from your stomach through your whole body.

The nephew of Pasenka "looked at me obliquely, like a wolf."

"We have no vodka, High Nobility."

On the path behind me an unorthodox troika (drawn by a single shaggy pony), crowded with frightened children and driven by a citified muzhik, was speeding slowly among the local collegiate registrars. There appeared in the cloudy sky a flock of cranes in the form of a triangle, guided by a leader who cried out his orders in a loud voice.

"Then, brother, if you don't have vodka give me a Coke. Better a tomtit in hand than a crane in the sky."

The cranes were already distant, and because of the wind the triangle was turning into a circle. When cranes

descend to rest, they set sentinels to watch over the sleeping flock, and these stand upright on only one leg, holding on their raised foot a stone, so that if sleep strikes, the stone will fall to the ground and the noise will wake them. . . . Is it possible, I thought, that someone would eat them?

II

LENIN died on January 21, 1924. In six days a provisional wooden mausoleum was built in Red Square to hold the embalmed corpse. On the twenty-sixth it was decided to give Lenin's name to Petrograd. The mausoleum was remade, again of wood, in May. Joseph Roth saw it in 1926: "It is a mixture, unintended but symbolically effective, of a monument and a speaker's platform." That description also goes for the permanent monument of red granite, constructed in the years 1929-30 and designed by the architect Aleksei Shchusev, who was the author of the two temporary mausoleums as well. Shchusev perhaps had in mind the Kaaba, the gray cube in the courtyard of the Great Mosque at Mecca, around which Muslim pilgrims walk seven times. At Lenin's tomb the pilgrims form a long line—an example of the innumerable lines that are seen everywhere. During the war Lenin was evacuated to Kuibyshev, the ancient Samara, then had to cohabit with Stalin. Now everything is as it was

before. When Ho Chi Minh (He Who Illuminates) died in Hanoi, they embalmed him like Lenin and built him a mausoleum imitating Shchusev's. To finish up they named Saigon Ho Chi Minh City. Another imitation of Lenin's tomb is in Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia, "where even the butterflies sting" (Shklovsky).

Shchusev studied architecture in Paris. In the center of Moscow, in the years 1931-35, he built the Moscow Hotel—of red granite and white marble, fourteen stories high, enlarged in 70—in the place where, until 1913, the city's biggest market for meat, chicken, fish, game, vegetables had been; one of the marvels of Moscow, it was demolished like Les Halles in Paris, probably for the same reasons.

One of the systems adopted to reduce the lines in front of the stores is reported by Leonid Abalkin, a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. "Take for example, sausages," writes the academician. "There is the usual kind that costs 2 rubles a kilo, and there is the higher-quality kind at 4.50 rubles a kilo. In front of the stores that sell these sausages there were always long lines. We doubled the price (to 9 rubles a kilo) and the situation totally changed."

This method of solving problems is as ancient in Russia as the use of the abacus. Chekhov made a long journey to the island of Sakhalin, at the far end of Eastern Siberia, to visit the penitentiaries there. A Katorga (prison) official said to him, "The prisoners, especially those in chains, love to present every sort of stupid petition. When I was appointed here and toured the prison for the first time, I received fifty petitions; I accepted them and announced that only those prisoners whose petitions were not worthy of attention would be punished. Only two petitions were in order; the others were mere nonsense, and therefore I ordered a sound flogging to be given to forty-eight individuals. The next time, twenty-five petitions were presented, then fewer, and then even fewer. Now they present me with no more petitions."

Chekhov made this journey in 1890, over a hundred years ago, at the age of thirty. Already ill since '84, he must have dealt with discomforts and fatigues of every kind.

He left Moscow April 21st,

went from Moscow to Yaroslavl by train,

Yaroslavl-Perm by boat on the Volga and the Kama,

Perm-Tyumen by train,

Tyumen-Sretensk by coach, crossing Lake Baikal in a boat (about three thousand kilometres),

Sretensk-Nikolayevsk by boat on the Shilka and the Amur,

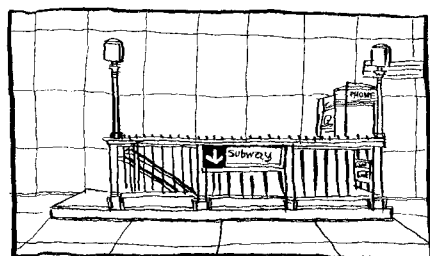
Nikolayevsk-Sakhalin by ship, arriving at Aleksandrovsk (Sakhalin) the eleventh of July.

The day before, a prisoner had been whipped. "He showed me his buttocks, livid with bruises. . . ." Eastern Siberia was inhabited by clean people. "At night when you enter the room where they sleep, there is neither a stink nor the 'odor of Russians.' . . . A cleanliness that our Ukrainians do not even dream of, and so they are infinitely cleaner than Russians. . . . The bread is most delicious."

The bread in the Siberia of Dostoyevski, closer to Moscow, was also very good. "The climate is excellent," one reads at the beginning of "Memories from the House of the Dead." "The girls there flower like roses. . . . The game runs through the streets and throws itself in the way of the hunter. There one drinks champagne in inordinate quantities. The caviar is marvelous. . . . Altogether, it is a blessed land." For anyone who was outside the prisons.

Escape was not so difficult. Trotsky fled from the village where he was confined, on a sled drawn by three reindeer. "Like Santa Claus," said Nabokov.

THERE are some similarities between the United States and Russia. In 1861, Czar Alexander II abolished serfdom. Two years later, in 1863, Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery. Both nations are ignorant of the bidet and rightly consider the ground floor of a building to be the first floor. (Thus, what we Italians call the first



M. IAN

floor is for them the second, which causes continual errors in translations from the two languages.) Other similarities: a ban on selling alcohol near a church; the importance of firefighters, given the frequency of fires ("As everyone knows," says Turgenev, "our provincial towns burn down every five years"); finally, both Americans and Russians build in the country little wooden houses in a neoclassical style. Both love picnics and stuffed turkey, and both have a generic name for cats: the Americans Pussycat, the Russians Vaska, the diminutive of Vasily (Basil), the blessed one of Red Square.

One more thing the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had in common: their names—artificial, bureaucratic, too long, and, therefore, often replaced by two (similar) sets of initials, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., difficult to pronounce, or by two abbreviations, United States and Soviet Union, or simply by the dear old names, America and Russia. Now some Russians call their country Absurdistan.

Differences: paper money. In the U.S.A. bills are green and all of the same size, which is not very practical; and in the U.S.S.R., or, rather, in Russia, they are of different colors, like Easter eggs: orange for one-ruble bills, green for threes, azure for fives, pink for tens, gray for fifties, and rainbow for hundreds. Mayakovsky says:

And you who, through work and melancholy, have a face crumpled and green like a three-ruble bill.

The differences are not limited to bills.

PETERSBURG, old names: the Liteyny Prospect is one of the few streets whose old names were preserved. At No. 27 Pestel Ulitsa, in a big Moorish-style mansion at the corner of Liteyny Prospect, lived Joseph Brodsky. Pestel is the name of the leader of the Decembrists who was hanged, with four others, in 1826. Officers' Street, where Tolstoy lived when he left Turgenev's house; Four Corners Street; Christmas Street; Karavannaya Ulitsa (Caravan Street), where the caravans bringing tea from China arrived; the Sennaya (Haymarket Square); Chain Bridge; Kalinkin Bridge, where the ghost of Akaky Akakyevich appeared, in search of his stolen overcoat.

The Millionnaya—Millions Street,

like Miami's Millionaires' Row—which today is called Khalturin Ulitsa, was the home of the English Club. It was the most exclusive club for the aristocracy, and memorable banquets were held there. In Moscow, too, there was an English Club: servants in livery, in wigs and silk stockings. After a toast, glasses were thrown to the ground. Feoktist was the most famous chef at the English Club in Moscow at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Cooks often had strange names. Prince Bolkonsky's father's cook was called Foka, a Byzantine name; Tit was Kutuzov's old cook, harassed by the servants; Taras was the very skillful cook of Count Rostov, who not for nothing paid him a thousand rubles. ("What a sauté of woodcock in Madeira we'll have, *ma chère!*")

In restaurants the waiters were Tartars.

The Russians say Tatàrs, but, according to the critic Giampaolo Dosena, "one ends up calling them Tartars, because they are frightening: an allusion to Tartarus, the classical name of Hell." They had lost their former fierceness and become obliging. Tartar waiter, in tails and flourishing a napkin, to Stepan Arkadyevich Oblonsky, the brother of Anna Karenina: "Your usual cheese?" Oblonsky: "Yes, Parmesan."

Some memories of the ancient atrocities remained. People said, "An uninvited guest is worse than a Tartar." "Travelling," wrote Mandelstam, "I would read Zoshchenko's best book and be happy as a Tatàr who has stolen a hundred rubles."

Their contribution to Russian (and international) cuisine: tartar sauce (it's impossible to say "tatàr" sauce) and steak tartare.

Music was entrusted to the Gypsies. The men played and sang, the women danced and sang and at the end circled around the tables with a tray of champagne glasses, on which the clientele, after being served, left their offerings. Some of the Gypsy women were very beautiful, and might be bought by a rich patron: Sergei Nikolayevich, Tolstoy's brother, who had a horror of flies and gnats, bought one and married her. She was a good wife.

"Moscow of white stone" (Pushkin), "mother of cities" (Chekhov), "market of the fiancées" (Push-

GRANDFATHER WRITES HIS WILL

Trout bones on a gray-blue plate, fine
as larch needles. Shadow on a rib cage, rib bones
holding it back like a hand. What pierces
the X-ray reaches out to you like a hand, raven-clawed,
digging in, digging in.

Dinner over, a walk in the twilit park
across the street. The air tom-tomming with currents
of cool and warm—not Indian summer, not autumn.
A woman in a yellow sari, small-boned, graceful,
walks down a leaf-strewn path. You want to touch
each lozenge in the fabric before it blurs
in memory, becomes a shadow on a rib cage.
Everything these days is a shadow on a rib cage.

And what of the monkey bars? What of the scoop
of hazelnut ice cream? One heaped high like a sarcophagus,
clutching the sky to flesh-eating stone;
the other tasting of earth you will "return to."
Did you ever leave it? Carpet beneath your feet,
eight little snapshots—your grown children—
dangling from the gilded branches
of a little family tree.

The lights are on in your house, and no one hears
the scratch, scratch, scratch of your pen.

—DAVID WOO

kin), "Moscow the drunkard" (Esenin).

Old names: Street of the Hurried, Sparrow Hill, Robbers' Street, Old Woodcutters' Street, Guardians of Hunting Dogs Street, Gazette Street, Cooks' Street, Bakers' Street, Knives Street, Blacksmith Lane, where Dostoyevski died.

The Boloto (the swamp) was the great square where, in 1775, the Cossack Emelyan Pugachov, the leader of the terrible revolt of the serfs and Cossacks, was beheaded. After the execution the body was cut in pieces, and the pieces were set out in various quarters of the city.

Another Cossack, Stenka Razin, who, before Pugachov, had led a similar revolt, was beheaded in Moscow (1671) in the place reserved for executions—

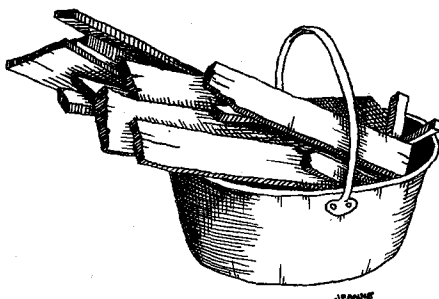
that is, the round stone platform (Lobnoye Mesto) in Red Square beside the Cathedral of Blessed Basil. Razin is the name of the street that goes past the gigantic Rossiya (Russia) Hotel, near Red Square, whose construction caused a good piece of old Moscow to be thoughtlessly destroyed. It is the street, frequented by crows, that the tourist—barely settled in one of the hotel's thirty-two hundred rooms, and having taken a quick look at Millet's gleaners, hung on the wall with a big rusty nail—hurries along, eager for his first look at the magical apparition of the gold domes of the Kremlin.

Cossack names: Ostap, Kozolup, Doloto, Kirdyaga, Taras, Kasyan, Kolopyor, Pidsytok, Zakrutyguba.

Cossack proverb: "Endure, cossack, and you will become *ataman* [chieftain]."

Cossack war cry: "Ghik, ghik!"—quite similar to the cry of the crow.

Crows appear in the first Russian literary document: "Song of the Campaign of Igor." According to Hesiod, they live nine times as long as man, and ravens even longer. "Crows, numberless as flies," says Gogol. They are everywhere: on city sidewalks, in gar-



dens, in the yellow fields of rye,
in the sky, in the forests.

For the third day rain falls
gnaws the gray ice
and of the crow on the birch tree
washes the beak.

(Tarkovsky)

In spite of being a kind of hyena, in spite of its funereal color, and in spite of Turgenev's calling it "the most respectable bird, known for its devotion to its family," the crow has in itself something of the ridiculous. The word "crow" is used as an insult, a synonym for "lazybones," "idler": "Why did you stop, crow?"

RUSSIANS as I imagined them from novels and from translations: red-haired, like almost all the characters of Chekhov and Dostoyevski (even the cows in the fields have red coats). Usually consumptive. They often clear their throats. They bow low to the ground. They call each other *batiushka* (little father), *matushka* (little mother), little dove, brother, benefactor, High Nobility. They stamp their feet on the ground, like horses, when they are angry. They spit on the ground as a sign of disdain. They live, in general, on the fourth floor (the fourth floor of the translator, which is usually the third floor for us Italians, or French or Germans). They walk not up and down but from one corner to another.

The Great Russians (of the north) have red hair, sky-blue eyes, and "noses in the shape of an onion," like Tolstoy—he says it himself, in a letter. The Little Russians (of the south), like Gogol and Chekhov, have dark eyes and black hair—cut, at one time, in such a way that they were nicknamed "tufts." The barber left a kind of mane in the center of the skull while the two sides were shaved. In Rome the movie makeup people called this haircut "Bashkir style." The custom had already been lost by Chekhov's time, I think; but in prison a convict still had half his head completely shaved, so that if he escaped he would be easily recognizable.

The women?

"In Russia," says Gogol, "everything loves to present itself in grand proportions, everything without exception: mountains, and forests, and steppes,



"The National Basketball Association is here to see you, sir."

and faces, and lips, and feet." Like the Bobolina, also described by Gogol: "One of whose legs alone appeared bigger than the entire torso of one of those dandies who fill the salons nowadays."

"Russia of the heavy buttocks," says Blok.

"I love their little feet," Pushkin says, "but you probably wouldn't find, in all Russia, three pairs of women's feet that are well made."

And there is the marvellous Natasha of "War and Peace."

CONSUMPTION was the national disease. It was not believed to be contagious; the sick and the healthy lived together. The cure was to go to the Crimea to drink koumiss—fermented mare's milk—once drunk by the ancient Scythians. Tolstoy and Chekhov cured themselves this way.

Two of Tolstoy's brothers died of consumption. Also Dostoyevski's mother and his first wife. Dostoyevski himself died from coughing blood. He died on a sofa, an item of furniture very often used by the Russians for sleeping (following a custom that had come from the Orient) and for dying. Even Stalin, according to Molotov, died on a sofa. People often slept without undressing, as the muzhiks habitually did, at times not even taking

off their boots or their *lapy* (clogs). The typical sofa was covered with oilcloth.

Sleeping was not a problem. Tolstoy, who was born on a sofa, made himself an overcoat of rough canvas, which he put on when he wanted to spend the night under a tree in his garden at Yasnaya Polyana. For a pillow he used a big dictionary. And Mandelstam tells of an amputee who at night took off his wooden leg and used it for a pillow.

It was a common custom to have one's heels scratched by the servants, in order to sleep better. The servants themselves slept almost anywhere except on a bed or a sofa; usually it was on the ground, with a newspaper for a mattress, or on the big Russian stove.

The younger daughter of Tolstoy, Alexandra (Sasha), also went to the Crimea to be cured by drinking koumiss. Gorky was cured at Capri.

CHEKHOV died at forty-four. Since the age of twenty-eight, he had suffered from insomnia, and he cured it by drinking a bottle of beer every night, often of bad quality. He thought that he was descended from the artisan Andrei Chokhov, who cast the colossal cannon (the czar of cannons, which never succeeded in firing) that is in the garden of the Kremlin, near the czar

of bells, an enormous bell, broken during casting, which never succeeded in ringing—symbols, in Chekhov's words, of that "Russian tendency to spend money in the construction of every sort of uselessness when the most pressing human needs are not yet satisfied."

"The best Russian writer is Chekhov," W. H. Auden said, "because he is the only one who has the least bit of common sense." Except for the common sense, Auden is right. Tolstoy read aloud to his family a story of Chekhov's, and fell asleep on the manuscript of "Fathers and Sons," which Turgenev had given him to read.

In 1894 Chekhov was in Milan. He saw the Duomo and the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, and visited the crematorium—"that is, the cemetery where they burn the dead." He wanted to go to Como, but he had to give it up because it was too hot on the lake. His grandfather had been a serf.

Chekhov also concerned himself with toilets. It is well known, he says, that the Russians hold this type of comfort in disdain. "In the villages there are no toilets at all; in monasteries, at fairs, in inns, and in every type of industry . . . they are absolutely disgusting." In Siberia the toilet was nothing more than a big stick: for defense against wolves.

In the course of a journey Chekhov slept, for lack of anything better, in a second-class railway carriage abandoned on a disused track. "During the night," he writes, "I got down from

the carriage for a little need, and outside was an authentic marvel. . . . The moon, the limitless steppe with the tumuli, and the desert; a silence of the tomb; the wagons and the wheels that stood out shining in the shadow. The world seemed dead."

In Russia, the chamber pot was called Yakov Andreyich—that is, James, the son of Andrew. Andrew must therefore be considered the father of the chamber pot. It had a human name, as it does also with us Italians: Giùli (Julius) in Lombardy and Zi'Peppe (Uncle Joe) in Lazio. The chamber pot was a luxury. Toilets, when there were any, were almost always in the courtyard, and to get up at night and go out into the cold was a dangerous undertaking. "At night it is a true martyrdom," Chekhov says. "Darkness, wind, doors that squeak and are hard to open, wanderings through the dim courtyard, a suspicious silence, no newspaper."

Fortunately, the good Yakov Andreyich sometimes peeked out from beneath the bed. It even happened that a young servant boy would sit for a few minutes on the pot to warm the edge for his master. "Yakov Andreyich," Chekhov says, "resembled a tureen and was decorated with friezes in delicate mezzotints."

WIDESPREAD among the muzhiks was the custom, probably from China, of beating their wives, even for no reason. In a popular song the mother says, "What a son, what

a head of the family you are! You don't beat your wife, who is young. . . ."

Soldiers, government employees, students all wore uniforms. Nicholas II prescribed even the color of the material for the dresses of the maids of honor and lady companions of the Empress.

The Russians called trousers "United States of America."

Before leaving on a journey they would close themselves in a room and sit for some minutes in silence, without looking at each other.

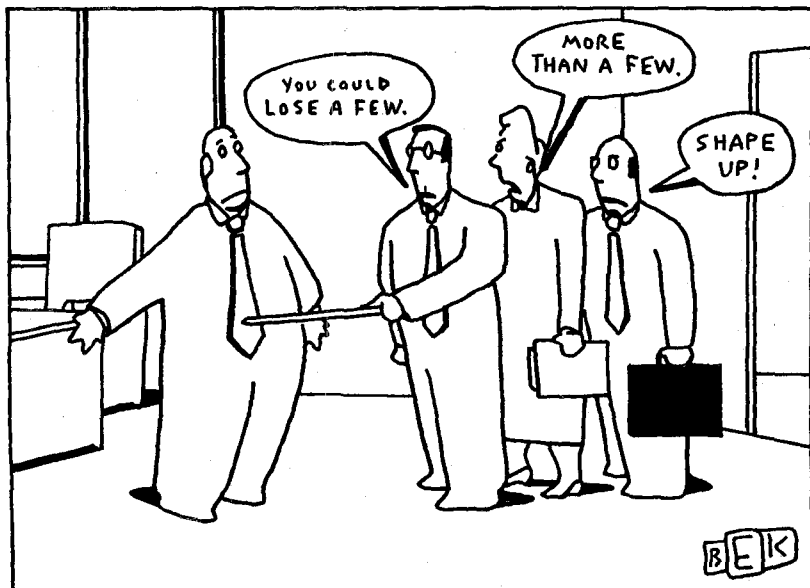
Servants kissed their masters on the shoulder. At Christmas they would dress as bears, Turks, innkeepers, and ladies, and dance in the drawing room.

Other widespread maladies: hemorrhoids, which a friend of Chekhov's cured by keeping a chestnut from an Indian chestnut tree in a pocket of his trousers, and petechial typhus, caused by the immense number of lice then living in Russia, which equalled the number of bedbugs and cockroaches. The louse was General Kutuzov's most powerful ally against Napoleon and, after the victory, deserved, like him, to receive from the czar the order of St. George of the first class and a monument on the Nevsky Prospect.

VODKA was a remedy for many evils. The proverb says: "Against troubles, vodka inside and vodka outside." Against infections, vodka with hot pepper; against toothache, vodka with horseradish. "The first little glass of vodka suffocates you," says the Russian drinker; "the second makes you bold, like a falcon; after the third the glasses fly like birds."

The best-quality vodka came in bottles whose corks were sealed with white wax, vodka of poorer quality in bottles sealed with red wax. When the landowner gave vodka to his peasants, or the officer to his soldiers, it was measured in buckets. The bucket was a precise measure: 12.29 litres. In restaurants the unit of measure was the gram. You ordered fifty or a hundred grams.

Alcoholism was widespread among rich and poor. The vice of drinking was called a "weakness." The speeches of the inebriated were a resource for writers—Pushkin and Dostoyevski in particular (the marvellous rambling on of the drunk Korovkin which ends "The Village of Stepanchikovo").



MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

There are many kinds of vodka:

Limonnaya, with lemon,
Kubanskaya, from Kuban,
Moskovskaya, from Moscow.

Kazanskaya, from Kazan—"where the trams were drawn by camels" (Shklovsky)—with a cossack on horseback on the label.

Pertsovka, with hot pepper. This vodka was the principal purpose of coming to Moscow for a Roman citizen, who always carried with him on the journey, in an inside jacket pocket, a package of powdered Calabrian hot pepper, which he sprinkled liberally on whatever food, dry or in broth, was set before him, even before he knew what it was, and which he then offered courteously to his fellow-diners, much as in the railway stations of Chekhov's time travellers offered a powder for keeping off bedbugs to ladies who faced a night on the benches of the waiting room, behind a screen.

Koriandrovaya, with coriander,
Zubrovka, with bison grass,
Okhotnichya, of the hunter,
Stolichnaya, of the capital,
vodka with anise,
vodka with saffron,
Georgian vodka.

"Good vodka! How is it made?"

"With an infusion of cockroaches!"
(Chekhov)

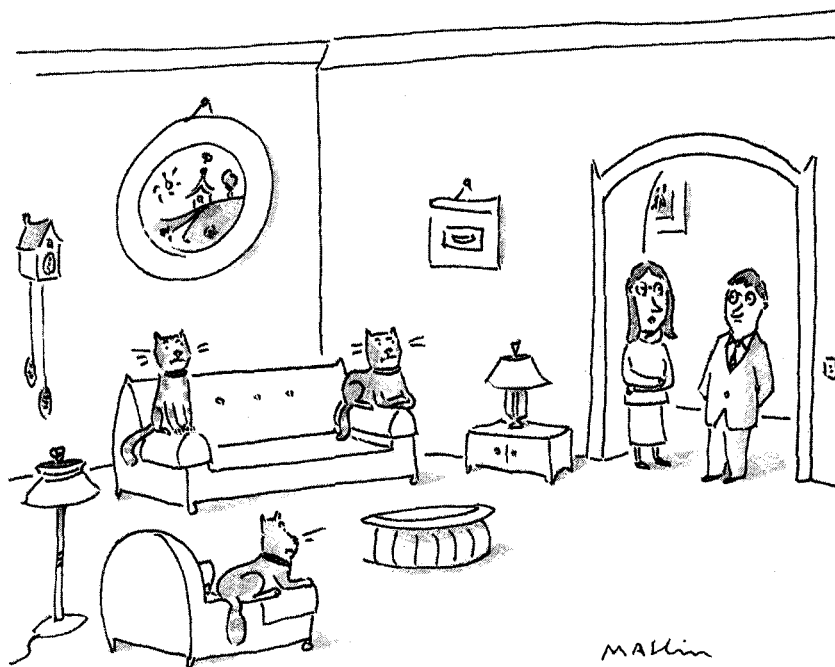
Gorilka, the Ukrainian vodka, which is drunk in a glass bearing the inscription "Even the monks drink it."

Starka, seasoned,
Krepkaya, strong,
gooseberry vodka, which is accompanied by *vatrushki*, sweet fritters served with hot antipasti,
vodka with horseradish,
vodka with juniper,
vodka with sorb apples, Esenin's favorite; and sweet vodka (for ladies), bitter vodka, pink vodka, dark vodka . . .

There are so many kinds of vodka because there are so many tastes. As the proverb says, "Some like the Pope and some the Popadià [the Pope's wife]." Gogol describes the color of dark vodka thus: "An olivelike color, the color that is found only in those transparent Siberian stones in which, in Russia, seals are carved."

One can pour vodka from a single bottle or make a mixture of two or three different kinds.

One can drink without eating anything. In this case the model is offered



"You must be thinking of another Ellen, Mr. Burle. I'm the Ellen whose cats are always allowed on the antimacassars."

by the degenerate Count Karneyev, of Chekhov's "The Shooting Party": "The waiter Ilya brought on a silver tray a tiny glass of vodka and half a glass of plain water. The Count drank the vodka in one gulp, then the water."

Or else eat, immediately after drinking, an appropriate morsel: like the doctor Andrei Yefimich Ragin—spied on, one might say, by Chekhov while he was immersed in reading. "Beside his book there is always a small decanter of vodka and a salted cucumber. . . . Every half hour, without raising his eyes from the book, he fills a little glass with vodka and drinks; then, without looking, gropes for the cucumber and bites off a piece of it."

But the best thing to eat after a glass of vodka is a piece of smoked sturgeon (*balyk*)—the only Russian dish to be praised by Gide during his visit to the U.S.S.R. in 1936. Céline, who arrived there the same year, found nothing good at all: "I don't like their cooking . . . I don't like their sunflower oil . . . it is the alimentary system of a neglected prison . . . the salted cucumbers are indigestible . . . the cockroaches . . ."

Dumas père—who understood more about cooking than Gide and Céline—in his "Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine" speaks with nostalgia of a stur-

geon soup called *ouka*, a very expensive food for the rich. He says he wrote to Russia for the recipe, but as far as is known he never received it. The best sturgeon are the small ones (which used to be cooked in silver pans), but they can reach enormous dimensions—like one caught in 1769 that was sixty feet long and weighed two thousand three hundred and ten pounds. It was worthy of being exhibited in the elegant windows of Milyutin, on the Nevsky Prospect—which at that time were well stocked—perhaps along with "cherries for five rubles each," or "a gigantic watermelon, as big as a carriage," as Gogol says, and other costly gastronomic rarities, destined, unfortunately, only to be looked at with longing by the great majority of the passersby. Today in the windows there are no cherries for five rubles each—only, as Céline said, "an immense heap of useless junk . . . absolutely unsellable except in Russia. . . ."

THE word one encounters most often in the classics of Russian literature is "cabbage," followed by "cucumber." "Cabbage-eater" is what the Russian is called in America, as the Frenchman is called "frog," short for "frog-eater," frogs being something that Anglo-Saxons refuse to eat. Es-

coffier succeeded in making his aristocratic clients at the Savoy in London eat frogs' legs only by hiding them on the menu under the name *Nymphes à l'aurore*; it was a cold dish, in aspic, that had a great success.

For Russians, cabbage is the principal food. It is served at almost every meal, as a first course, second course, vegetable, salad, perhaps dessert: cabbage soup (*shchi*), borscht, cabbage-filled rolls (*pirozhki*), cabbage pie à la Muscovite (*pirog*), sauerkraut with mushrooms, red cabbage, sauerkraut tart, etc. The smell of cabbage soup impregnates public offices. Cabbage in Russia is eternal. The muzhik says, "The worm eats the cabbage and dies before the cabbage."

In a few words Chekhov sketches the portrait of a Russian eater: "On his beard he had little pieces of cabbage, and he gave off the odor of vodka." "What I desire," said Pushkin, "is quiet and a pot of cabbage soup, the biggest possible."

Shchi (*shchi lenivye*) is the cabbage soup of Great Russia, capital Moscow, and of White Russia (Byelorussia), capital Minsk. The adjective *lenivye* means "lazy," "idle," "sluggish," or, as Gogol would say, "smoker of the sky," perhaps intending to show how little work the preparation of this soup

requires, especially when the poor make it: water, salt, and cabbage.

Other dishes of the kitchens of the poor: black bread soaked in water, bread and salt with kvass, bread and onions. "What shall we eat? A first-rate meal. First course, bread and kvass; second course, kvass and bread" (Tolstoy). For the convicts who worked in the mines of Sakhalin: turnips or tallow candles. The muzhiks said, "We look at the same sun, but we don't eat the same thing."

Borscht, on the other hand, is the cabbage soup of Little Russia (Ukraine), capital Kiev, a country of heavy eaters, where a chicken is considered a simple appetizer, where the best sausages are made, and where the proverb "The best bird is the sausage" was born.

In Great Russia at one time it was said that while the borscht was cooking, the Ukrainians threw into the pot some azure five-ruble notes or pink ten-ruble ones, preferably worn by use, to make the soup more tasty. The characteristic of borscht is to be colored red by the juice of its beets and veined white by the sour cream added at the last minute. Above all, says Zilin, the Secretary of the College of Justices of the Peace, and at mealtimes an irresistible evoker of the delights of Rus-

sian cooking, "cabbage soup must be very hot, scalding" (Chekhov).

IN the penitentiary of Omsk, in Siberia, where Dostoyevski spent four years, the thin cabbage soup (water and cabbage), besides not being very hot, was served with cockroaches. Cockroaches, along with bedbugs, were then so common in houses that their presence on a plate did not prevent the soup from being eaten. "Our peasant," says Chekhov, "blows with repugnance on the kvass in which there are cockroaches, and nonetheless drinks it." (Kvass is a fermented drink made from rye and malt; Napoleon's troops called it *limonade de cochon* but did not despise it.)

When they are so many, cockroaches and bedbugs are no longer silent but produce what Chekhov calls "a murmuring and a noisy rustling": "The walls and ceiling [of the *isba*] were covered by a black crape that moved as if stirred by the wind; from some parts of the crape that moved rapidly forward and back one could guess of what this living, mobile mass consisted; one heard a murmuring and a noisy rustling as if the cockroaches and bedbugs were in a great hurry and conversing with one another."

In comparison, this from "War and Peace" is a summer idyll: "A cricket cried across the passage, on the street someone was shouting and singing, the cockroaches rustled on the table, on the icons, and on the walls."

Perhaps in order to feel closer to his muzhiks, at a costume ball Tolstoy disguised himself as a cockroach.

IN Chekhov's letters to his beloved wife Olga "cockroach" becomes a tender word of love:

"My treasure, little cockroach . . ."

"I embrace my little cockroach and kiss it a million times. . ."

Nor does he stop at "little cockroach":

"I kiss my little bug."

"I embrace my little turkey."

"My little mosquito."

"My dear pony . . ."

"My little sperm whale, treasure . . ."

But the animal that Chekhov referred to most often on these occasions was the dog.

"My dear little dog."

"My little bitch."



"While we've got the chance, Dad, we'd like to thank you for these little glimpses of you we've had through the years!"

"I embrace my dear, my lovely dachshund."

Less comprehensible is the word "dog" pure and simple.

"My soul, angel, my dog, little dove . . ."

"My little treasure, dog, my Olyusha . . ."

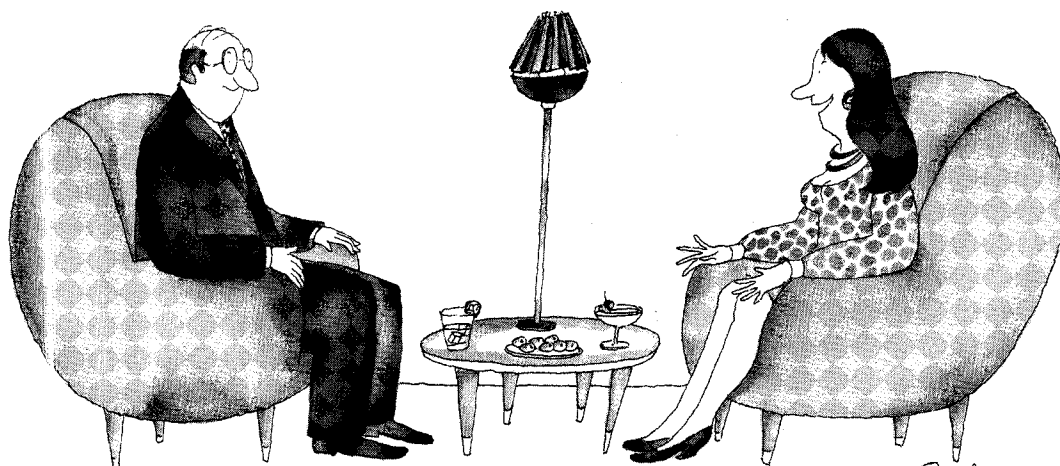
Olga survived the author of the letters by many years. She died at Yalta, on the Black Sea, "city of Tartars and hairdressers," scene of the story "The Lady with the Little Dog." With Chekhov's sister, she lived in the house where Chekhov had resided for some years: the modest house of a great writer where there are no books—a thing less strange than it appears at first sight. In the medicine chest Chekhov kept a revolver.

In the Crimea Chekhov saw an ideal house: "A house with four rooms, a little house of Tartar design, a kitchen, a stable for the cows, a drying room for tobacco, a spring rising from the rocks, a cart, a scale, a cupboard, a wardrobe, two tables, a dozen Viennese chairs, a sofa, an iron stove." No bed. "My dream," he wrote in another letter, "is to build—in the woods that I already own—a house, to plant roses, to give orders that I will receive no one, and to write short stories."

Few memories remain of the Yalta of Chekhov's time: the villas, the mansions of those days are crumbling, the gardens have grown wild. The cockroaches remain.

One of Chekhov's best stories is about a dog with a reddish coat called Kashtanka (Chestnut), which was the name of a dog he had in his house. The cat of the house was called Fyodor Timofeyich: a name and a patronymic, as if he were an orthodox Christian—that is, Theodore, the son of a former cat, Timothy.

The most common name for dogs is Sharik, a diminutive of the word "ball" (that is, Little Ball), just as for cats the most common name is Vaska, and for bears it is Misha (Mike). Sharik is the good black-and-white dog in the prison where Dostoyevski was shut up, which no one looked at or caressed except him; in "Memories



"You have a really weird energy."

from the House of the Dead" he wrote, "A Russian, usually, does not believe in feeding dogs."

Esenin says:

O sister bitches, brother dogs,
Men persecute me like you.

LIKE cabbages, cucumbers are an essential vegetable for Russians. Céline says, "Over there, man fills his belly with cucumbers," and Saltykov Shchedrin, the satirist, sententiously, "Man needs everything: butter, cabbages, cucumbers."

Inasmuch as cucumbers are made almost entirely of water, they have in Russia virtues unknown to us: "He gave me some water and a cucumber"—that is, more water—"to refresh myself" (Leskov). "In the event of inhaling charcoal fumes cover the head with pickled cucumbers and tie a cloth around it" (Goncharov).

Also surprising is the use that Russian writers make of the cucumber as a term of comparison: Vronsky "had always a freshness that could be compared to that of a big Dutch cucumber, green and bright." Even a beautiful girl can be compared (by Chekhov) to a cucumber: "You are very pretty. . . . You remind me of a fresh salted cucumber; that, so to speak, still tastes of the hothouse but already is a little salty and has the perfume of dill."

The cucumber in Russian is *ogurets*, the cabbage *kapusta*. Other names in Russian cooking: *zakuski*, *pirozhki*, *solyanka*, *okroshka*. . . . *Zakuski* are appetizers, the glory of Russian cuisine. Professor Filip Filipovich Preo-

brazhenski remembered nostalgically the hot appetizers of the Slavyansky Bazaar, a restaurant (and hotel) in Moscow which one meets often in the pages of Russian literature; a character in Chekhov's masterpiece "Peasants" worked there as a waiter for many years, before retiring to end his days in the misery of his native village. Famous names: blini Demidov, cream Malakov, saddle of veal Orlov, beef Stroganoff. A letter from a friend in New York: "Some days ago at the house of friends I had the Russian dish *coulibiac*, a pie of meats, cabbage and mushrooms, herbs, spices—a delight. The pastry on top and underneath was perfect. I had more than one piece. It was picnic fare."

THE first Russian restaurant has opened in Milan. The Russian tongue doesn't seem so abstruse anymore: *restoran*, *menu*, *vino*, *sardini*, *omlet*, *antrekot*, *eskalop*, *file*, *kotlet*, *bifstek*, *rosbif*, *fazan*, *kartofel*, *ris*, *pomidory*, *tort*, *kompot*, *ananas*, *banan*, *limon*, *mandarin*. . . . Bread and salt, brothers! (*Bon appétit!*)

In Milan we also have the Kremlin, the Kremlin of Gadda: "Near the new polytechnic . . . rises a building somewhat theatrical, sharp and rock-like, but above all foolish, popularly called the Kremlin." It is called the Kremlin probably because of its two spires, which recall, rather, Petersburg, or, better, those pretentious cement spires raised on simple dwellings in Leningrad, under the reign of Joseph the Terrible, in imitation of the

gilded "Dutch" spires of Petersburg.

When the doorkeeper's clock of our Kremlin says ten, the carillon of the great black-and-gold English clock on the Spasskaya tower in Moscow sounds midday. The tourists stand motionless, "like horses being put in harness" (Goncharov), and an enormous flock of croaking crows rises in flight from the walls, fluttering over Red Square.

III

IN 1703 Peter the Great founded the new capital, naming it, in the German style, Sanktpeterburg (Saint-petersburg), City of St. Peter. The name was then divided in two, becoming St. Petersburg, and giving the impression that there exists a saint by the name of Petersburg. Along the way the saint was lost, and Petersburg remained: the city of Czar Peter, Slavonicized in 1914 to Petrograd. But the name, too long for the Petersburgers, had already been shortened to Peter.

Peter the Great was the son of Alexis the Mild, who had seven thousand rebels exterminated at one time and the head of Stenka Razin cut off. Peter himself, during the last revolt of his praetorians, had seven hundred and ninety-nine of them hanged in Moscow. Nabokov, without letting himself be influenced by the enthusiasm of Voltaire, called him an "arch-bully."

When, at the suggestion of his court jester Yakov (an ancestor of Turgenev), Peter with his own hand cut off the beards—a symbol of backwardness—

of the boyars, it was not a jest. Taking the scissors in hand, he knew he was risking life and throne. There was a distant echo of this undertaking in America, when Lionel Barrymore said of Louis B. Mayer, of M-G-M: "He would cut off the beard of Tolstoy."

Peter had thin black whiskers. He was almost six and a half feet tall. His gigantic boots, which fascinated Lenin, are preserved in the Kremlin; at the Hermitage is his worktable, which is very high, because he used to write standing up. The "Bible of Peter the Great" is a leather box in the form of a big volume, which contains six bottles. He dressed carelessly. "He had patches on his bottom," says (approximately) Marina Svetayeva. "He liked German beer and strong Knaster tobacco." He was very strong, and could bend a silver coin with his fingers. He died young, at fifty-one. "When his bier was opened, after the revolution, he was still there, entire and undamaged" (Joseph Roth). Ready, one might say, to be transferred to the mausoleum in Red Square.

The same thing happened to the father of the Italian writer Antonio Delfini, who died even younger than Peter the Great—at thirty. Delfini was present at the opening of the bier. "I believe I am the only person in the world," he wrote later, "to whom such a thing has happened: the only son of fifty who has seen his father of thirty."

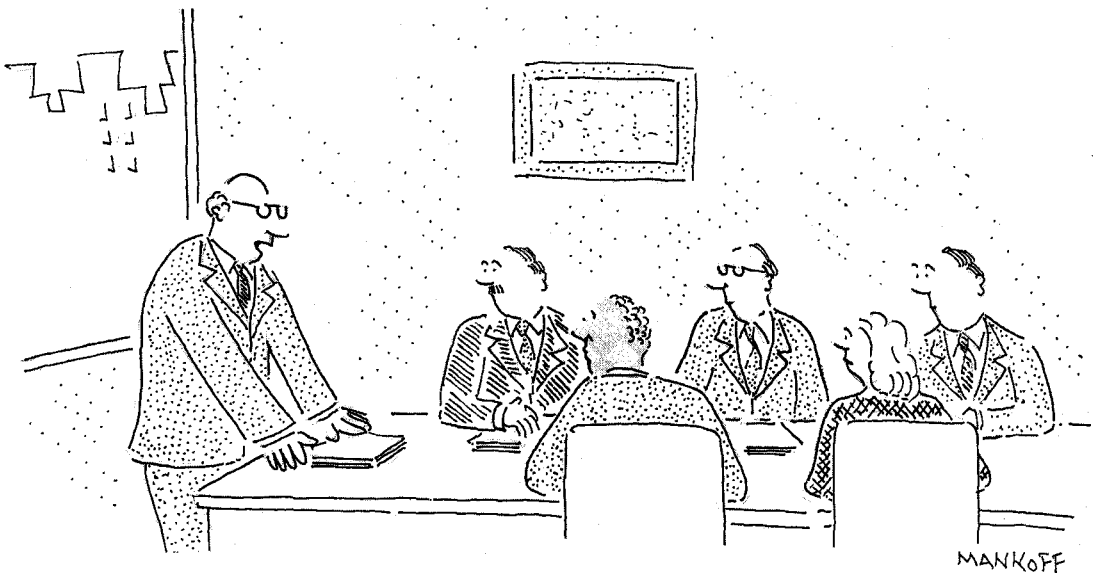
Peter the Great created the *chin—*

the table of hierarchies, of ranks. All the employees of the State were divided into fourteen categories:

1. Chancellor of the State
2. Regular Privy Counsellor
3. Privy Counsellor
4. Regular Counsellor of State
5. Counsellor of State
6. Collegiate Counsellor
7. Court Counsellor
8. Collegiate Assessor
9. Titular Counsellor
10. Collegiate Secretary
11. Naval Secretary
12. Government Secretary
13. Registrar of the Senate, of the Synod, and of the Cabinet
14. Collegiate Registrar.

Every rank had its title. The Privy Counsellor was "Excellency"; the sixth, seventh, and eighth ranks were "High Nobility," etc. Every rank had its special uniform, on which the greatest possible number of decorations, of the first, second, and third class, were displayed, on the chest, hanging around the neck, or even on the scabbard of the sabre: the order of St. Andrew, instituted by Peter the Great; the order of St. Vladimir, the order of St. George, the order of St. Stanislaus and that of St. Anna, established by the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp in memory of the Empress Anna, which Tolstoy received after he had fought in the Crimean War (which signalled the end of his military career), and many others. The father of Dostoyevski, a modest doctor at the Hospital for the Poor in Moscow, had collected a cross of St. Vladimir of the fourth class, a cross of St. Anna of the third class, and a cross of St. Anna of the second class.

After the première of "La Forza del Destino" at the Imperial Theatre in Petersburg, Verdi was made Commander of the Imperial and Royal Order of St. Stanislaus. He put the badge in his suitcase, but in Russia decorations are worn every day, even on trains, even at work. Turgenev's Panshin walked "with a slight stoop, perhaps because of the decoration of St. Vladimir 'on his neck,' which weighed him down, drawing him toward the



"Since I am chairman, it behooves me to go first. 'What I Did Over My Summer Vacation,' by Wilson Rupert Hewes."

ground"; and little Helen, of "Insulted and Injured," while the doctor was visiting her, "could only gaze fixedly at the enormous order of St. Stanislaus hanging around his neck."

Platon Kuzmich Kovalyov ("The Nose") was a Collegiate Assessor, but as a title of the Caucasus this was, of course, of minor value, like degrees from certain universities; therefore he introduced himself as Major Kovalyov. His nose, on the other hand, which had mysteriously abandoned his face and transformed itself into an independent human being, seemed from its dress to be a Counsellor of State: embroidered gold uniform with a tall stancup collar, chamois pants, sword, and plumed hat.



"When we implant your pacemaker, we can, for a modest additional fee, also implant your beeper."

IN Petersburg (in summer, "sultriness, dust, strange smells...") three streets converge—forming the so-called Trident—on the tall gold spire of the Admiralty, which Chekhov compares, for leanness and thinness, to the Titular Counsellor Kraterov.

On the left is the Prospect of the Ascension (Voznesensky Prospect)—the Prospect V. of "Crime and Punishment," where, in a deserted courtyard, Raskolnikov hid the profits of his crime, and where, Gogol says, lived the barber Ivan Yakovlevich, on whose shop sign was painted "a man with his cheeks soaped and the legend 'Also lets blood.'"

Signs, illustrated so that they would be understood by the illiterate, formed, along the sidewalks of the city, a permanent show of the kind of popular painting dear to Magritte—a show that, unfortunately, thanks to compulsory education, has disappeared. Gogol particularly liked barbers' signs. "Grigory Grigorevich," he writes in "Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka," "sat down in his usual place at the head of the table, covering himself with an enormous napkin and becoming like those heroes whom barbers have painted on their signs."

Grigory Grigorevich reminds me of an uncle from Sondrio, a country town at the foot of the Alps, a man as good as gold, whom a misfortune had made a little absent-minded. Like Grigory Grigorevich, he used to sit at the head of the table, but he would get there far

too early, when it was still quite a while until dinnertime. The stoves had not yet been lighted, and the uncle, sitting in his place and covered by the napkin, was already waiting. After a bit, he would begin to look around, to drum with his fingers on the tablecloth. "But here," as Gogol would say, "a thick fog shrouds the story."

In the center of the Trident is Gorokhovaya Ulitsa, the Street of Peas, where, in a house "whose population would have been sufficient for a whole country town," lived Ilya Ilyich Oblomov, the illustrious symbol of Russian laziness. With him lived the old servant Zakhar, roosting permanently on the stove, to which he retired like a bear to his den, and the other usual inhabitants of those mansions: bugs, cockroaches, and mice.

Goncharov—the author of "Obломov"—and Lenin were both born in the distant city of Simbirsk, on the Volga, which, in honor of Lenin, is now called Ulyanovsk. Said Oblomov, "I have never put on stockings by myself, as long as I have lived, thank God," and Lenin said, "The aim of my life is to fight Oblomovism."

One of the last streets that crosses the Street of Peas is the wide Morskaya Ulitsa, the home of elegant hairdressers' shops. No. 47 is a mansion of rosy

granite, ennobled by a coat of arms representing, one might say, the soul of Russia—two bears holding up a chessboard—and there, with his family, and served by fifty servants, lived little Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov, destined to write and to die in exile. Vronsky lived on the same street. The Revolution replaced peas with the Polish Feliks Dzerzhinsky, the first Soviet Minister of the Interior and the head of the Cheka, whom Nabokov associates with his more sadly known successor, General Yagoda. From home, Vladimir Vladimirovich was taken by automobile to the aristocratic Tennishev school—where, a few years before, Mandelstam had studied—in Mokhovaya Ulitsa, the Street of Mosses, which recalls (or would recall, if, as I think, even this lovely name has disappeared) the marshes on which the city was built: so do Kozoye Boloto (Goat Marshes), Peski (the Sands), where Dostoyevski lived, the Bolotnaya (Swamp Street), etc. According to Shklovsky, a begging dog used to occupy the corner of Mokhovaya Ulitsa and Simyonskaya Ulitsa.

Chekhov recounts how "a noted poet, proceeding along the Mokhovaya, where the University was, lowered the window of the carriage and spit at the University." The reason for his con-

tempt, expressed in a typically Russian manner, is not reported. "The coachman," Chekhov says, "was so accustomed to this that whenever he passed the University he stopped."

In Moscow, too, there was a Mokhovaya Ulitsa: it is where the starving and mangy bastard of "Heart of a Dog," Sharik, learns to decipher the letters of the Cyrillic alphabet, using as a textbook the sign over a fish market. Thus Mayakovsky:

I learned the alphabet from signs,
turning pages of iron and tin.

Finally, on the right of the Trident is the most famous street in Russia, the Prospekt of the Neva, the Nevsky Prospect. The ignorant, servants and coachmen, said "Prespekt."

The Trident has its model in Rome. The three streets—Via di Ripetta, Via del Corso, and Via del Babuino—converge on the obelisk of Piazza del Popolo rather than on the slender spire of the Admiralty. Gogol, descending the Spanish Steps from Via Sistina, where he was living, and where he was writing the "poem" of "Dead Souls," continued his walk by setting off along the Nevsky Prospect (Via del Babuino), at the foot of which was a glimpse, on the right, of the Hôtel de Russie. A herd of goats was resting in the middle of the street.

IN 1912, eighteen thousand carriages and sleds were ready to parade along the Nevsky Prospect. In winter, with the snow, the silvery jingle of horses' bells was the only sound animating the streets of the capital, and the coachmen, "with their enormous behinds" (and their horses), were, even if they did not know it, important personages. A worker of the time, speaking of what characterizes a city, says, "There must be great mansions . . . a theatre, the police . . . coachmen. . ."

"All coachmen," Dostoyevski says, "have a taciturn and imperturbable character, as if, indeed, the continuous contact with horses roused in man a particular seriousness, or rather, you might say, gravity." But they were ready to brutally whip passersby who did not get out of their way, as happened to Raskolnikov on the bridge over the Neva, and as, many years before, had happened in London to Gulliver, when he returned from

MORE LATER, LESS THE SAME

The common is usually calm—they captured the storm last night, it's sleeping in the stockade, relieved of its duty, pacified, tamed, a pussycat. But not before it tied the flagpole in knots, and not before it alarmed the firemen out of their pants. Now it's really calm, almost too calm, as though anything could happen, and it would be a first. It could be the worst thing that ever happened. All the little rodents are sitting up and counting their nuts. What if nothing ever happened again? Would there be enough to "eke out an existence," as they say? I wish "they" were here now, kicking up a little dust, mussing my hair, taunting me with weird syllogisms. Instead, these are the windless, halcyon days. The lull dispassion is upon us. Serenity has triumphed in its mindless, atrophied way. A school of Stoics walks by, eager, in its phlegmatic way, to observe human degradation, lust, and debauchery at close quarters. They are disappointed, but it barely shows on their faces. They are late Stoa, very late. They missed the bus. They should have been here last night. The joint was jumping. But people change, they grow up, they fly around. It's the same old story, but I don't remember it. It's a tale of gore and glory, but we had to leave. It could have turned out differently, and it did. I feel much the same way about the city of Pompeii. A police officer with a poodle cut squirts his gun at me for saying that, and it's still just barely possible that I didn't, and the clock is running out on his sort of behavior. I'm napping in a wigwam as I write this, near Amity Street, which is buried under fifteen feet of ashes and cinders and rocks. Moss and a certain herblike creature are beginning to whisper nearby. I am beside myself, peering down, senselessly, since, for us, in space, there is neither above nor below; and thus the expression "He is being nibbled to death by ducks" shines with such style, such poise, and reserve, a beautiful, puissant form and a lucid thought. To which I reply, "It is time we had our teeth examined by a dentist." So said James the Lesser to James the More.

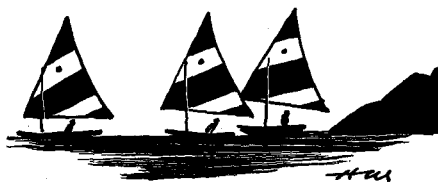
—JAMES TATE

Lilliput. Coachmen carried a clock, mounted in leather and secured to the back of their belt, to provide the exact time for passengers, and a thin cord was attached to their elbow, which the passenger could pull to make the carriage stop, as if it were a tram. To rein in the horses they emitted a special

sound: "*Tprrr*." They accompanied their masters (and clients) to parties, dinners, theatres, and waited for them outside in the cold, for hours. Only in the most frequented places were there shelters heated by bonfires.

Verdi's wife, who in 1862 was with the Maestro in Petersburg for the première of "*Forza*," wrote in a letter, "The poor in general and the coachmen in particular are the unhappiest creatures in the universe."

A coachman different (in part) from the others was Timofey, the son of Tolstoy by one of his peasants, whom



Tolstoy never acknowledged, although Timofey was, of all his sons, the one who most resembled him. Timofey served at Yasnaya Polyana as coachman. He mounted the box and asked his father, "Where do you wish me to take you, *barin* [master]?"

For his sojourn in the Russian capital Verdi brought along a hundred small bottles of Bordeaux table wine (a wine that Captain Potseluyev, of "Dead Souls," called simply *burdashka*); twenty bottles of good Bordeaux; and twenty bottles of champagne. He was also a hearty eater. Here is the menu of the meal served to him at the Grand Hotel in Milan on January 7, 1901, a few weeks before his death, by the devoted waiter Umberto Bertolazzi: "Risotto alla certosina, boiled sea bass with mayonnaise, braised beef, lamb cutlets, meat 'alla parmigiana,' roast turkey, salad, dessert, fruit, rum ice cream." Verdi ate everything—in small amounts, of course, but he did taste every dish. Risotto "alla certosina" (with shrimp, and perhaps frogs and mushrooms) was his favorite risotto, which sometimes he would cook himself, very well, it seems,

when he was at home, at Sant'Agata—I was about to say Yasnaya Polyana.

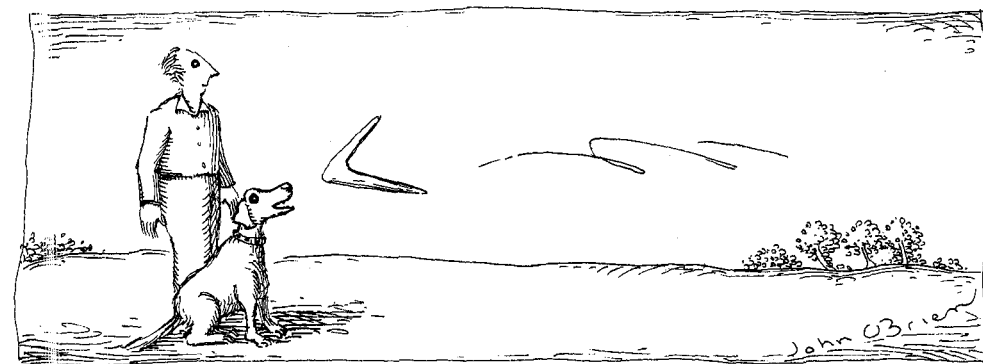
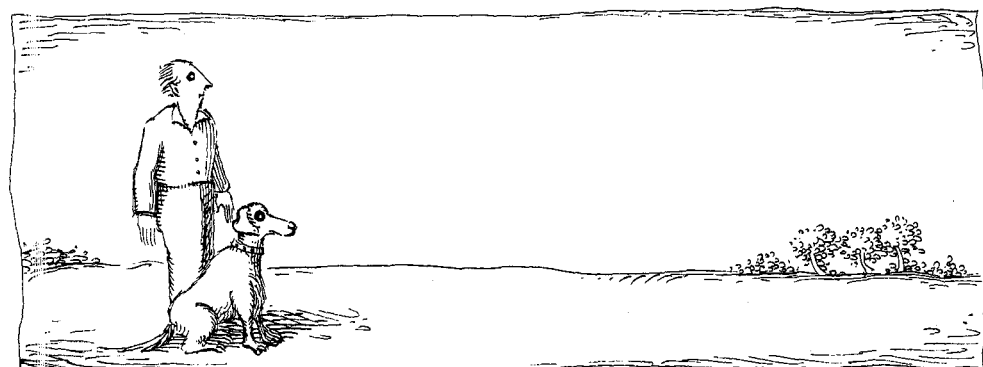
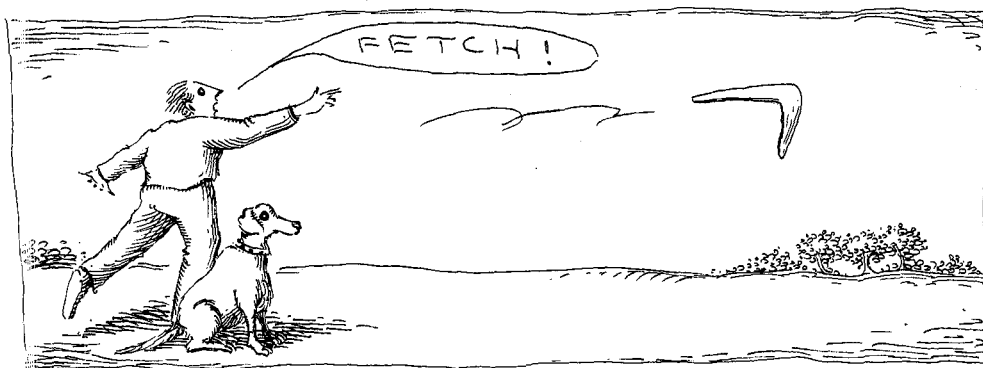
At No. 17 of the Prospect rises the mansion of the rich Count Stroganov, from whose kitchens, in all probability, came the recipe for beef Stroganoff. The present version of this dish—using not filet but very tough meat, cut by an axe striking the sort of blows the executioner who decapitated Stepa Razin on the round stone in Red Square would have been able to make—is, sadly, far from the original, and would make the poor Count turn in his grave. By chance, however, the dish ended up among the thousand recipes of the popular cookbook of Frate Indovino, under the Vernean (Jules Verne) name of beef Strogoff. Ingredients: beef, potatoes, onions, butter, salt, pepper, and yogurt, which replaces the sour cream (*smetana*), still

little known in Italian cooking. "It is a recipe of Tatiana Pavlova," says the author, "and constitutes a dish very tasty and very . . . Russian." The three dots summarize his diffidence concerning this cuisine. From Russian cooking, he seems to say, we must expect anything.

The Stroganov mansion is at the corner of the Prospect and the Moika canal, where Prince Yusupov threw Rasputin, who had survived poison and pistol shots. Throwing people into the Moika was a custom. Dolokhov, Pierre, and their companions ("War and Peace") seized the commissar of police, who was hurrying to arrest them, bound him shoulder to shoulder with a bear, and threw the pair into the Moika. Thieves were thrown into the Fontanka.

In Gogol's time, on the Prospect, at the hour of the greatest crowds—

between two and three in the afternoon, before lunch—one could see the nose of the Collegiate Assessor Kovalyov passing in its carriage, and on foot Kovalyov himself, hiding with a handkerchief the shameful lack of his nose, and (who knows?) the Titular Counsellor Akaky Akakyevich with his new overcoat. They strolled among the crowd—on the sonorous wooden sidewalks—"among raccoon coats and beaver collars" (Goncharov), skirting the Europe Hotel, the luxurious food emporium of the brothers Eliseyev, the sparkling windows of Milyutin, the famous French restaurants and Swiss cafés, where Pushkin, as everyone knows, drank his last lemonade, and Tolstoy, leaving for the Crimea, left debts. They mixed with Great and Little Russians, White Russians, Tartars, crows, elegant French masters of



language and of cooking, Germans with unmarked waistlines, land administrators, tutors, craftsmen, doctors, Finnish wet nurses, Italian architects and dancing masters. Gogol says, "There is nothing more beautiful than the Prospect, at least in Petersburg." Dostoyevski will think of it differently: "The broad, tedious street of Petersburg, exactly like a taut string." For Trotsky it will be merely "the main artery of the bourgeoisie."

Anyway, the Prospect soon began to decline. "From 1836," Gogol also says, "this noisy street, in constant agitation, bustling and chattering, was completely out of favor; now the promenade is along the Neva, on the Riverside of the English."

On the wooden sidewalk (which today no longer exists) of the Prospect, where on Sundays the drunken peasants lay sleeping, Zoshchenko saw Esenin coming toward him. Elegant, pallid, with lifeless eyes. They entered a beer hall. "Esenin says something to the waiter. And he brings him a glass of sorb-apple vodka. Esenin closes his eyes, drinks. And," says Zoshchenko, "I see how with every swallow life returns to him. His cheeks become rosier, his gestures more assured, his eyes shine."

Better in fact
to die of vodka
Than of boredom!

Mayakovsky had said to him. But neither of them died from vodka. Esenin slit his wrists, in 1925, in a hotel room. He was thirty years old. Mayakovsky killed himself hastily five years later. At thirty-six he was stung by "the wasp of a bullet" in his office in Moscow, near the great Dzerzhinsky Square, with its gloomy monument to Dzerzhinsky—of which only the base remains—where the Mayakovsky Museum is now.

In Dzerzhinsky Square begins Kirov Street, where, at No. 39, is the former Tsentrosyuz, the only building in Russia designed by Le Corbusier. Corbu (that is, crow)—a nickname that in the land of crows should have brought him luck—also entered the contest for the Palace of the Soviets, but without success. His architecture was exactly the opposite of Stalinist architecture, which, with the passage of time, begins to exert a strange, perverse Asian fascination.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, "latrine cleaner and water carrier drafted by the Revolution," was a Georgian, like Stalin, with penetrating eyes, like those of Picasso. He was born in Bagdady, a beautiful Oriental name that recalls Baghdad. That name was deleted and replaced by Mayakovsky. According to Marina Svetayeva, Mayakovsky was two things at the same time: "He is the driver and also the horse."

AT the end of the Nevsky Prospect is Alexander Nevsky Square (Alexander Yaroslavovich, the liberator of Russia, was called Nevsky after his victory over the Swedes, in 1240, on the banks of the Neva), with the great convent and the church dedicated to him (he was canonized by the Orthodox Church), and two ancient cemeteries, in one of which, Tikhvin, rests Dostoyevski, who had begged his wife not to bury him in the Volkovskoye cemetery among the literati. ("I do not want to lie in the middle of my enemies.") Around Dostoyevski are Glinka, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Tchaikovsky. Dostoyevski had never shown a particular inclination toward music; he appreciated Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Rossini and could not bear Wagner. Destiny wished him to have as neighbors in death, besides his friend Nekrasov, the greatest musicians of Russia. After our companions in school, in military service, in hospital or prison, these are our final companions.

In the other cemetery the Neapolitan architect Carlo (Ivanovich) Rossi is buried. Besides the false, unreliable arch (the Arch of the General Headquarters), on which gallops the six-horse carriage of Victory, as Solzhenitsyn says, Rossi built Teatralnaya Ulitsa (which now bears his name), in which he tried to realize a street with perfect proportions—the dream of an alchemist rather than an architect. It is twenty-two metres wide, and is flanked by buildings each of which is twenty-two metres high and two hundred and twenty metres long. It would have pleased our great writer Carlo

Emilio Gadda, who objected to the irregularities of the Milanese streets and admired the ugly but regular Via Dante.

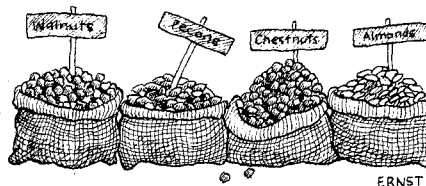
All traces of the tomb of Giacomo Quarenghi, Catherine the Great's architect, who was born near Bergamo and died at Petersburg in 1817, vanished. It was rediscovered only in 1966, and now Quarenghi rests not far from Carlo Rossi. It is a well-deserved repose, if one thinks of everything the illustrious Bergamask architect built in thirty-eight years of work. Dzhakomo Kvarengi "worked like a horse," wrote Catherine, using a typical Russian comparison of the time. He worked like those Bergamasks one meets at night on the Milan-Bergamo railway line. They get up before dawn to go to their jobs in Milan, and return at night to Bergamo; a bus takes them home, where, as soon as they finish dinner, "murderous slumber lays upon them his leaden mace." So says Shakespeare—to whom Tolstoy preferred Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of "Uncle Foma's Isba."

"The good Quarenghi," as the poet Pindemonte calls him, had a large, typically Bergamask face, pouting and cordial at the same time, with a giant potato nose in the middle, probably reddened by vodka, a target for caricaturists. Meeting him on the Nevsky, the Collegiate Assessor Kovalyov would have taken him for his own nose.

When spring arrived at Yasnaya Polyana and Tolstoy said, "I am going to the Nevsky Prospect," he meant that he was going to a road at the edge of his property to watch the groups of muzhiks passing, going off on pilgrimages; and surely he wished to join them. ("Their beards have a wonderful aroma of spring.")

GORKY (Aleksei Maksimovich Peshkov) was much—too much—esteemed by Lenin, who could not bear Dostoyevski, and by Stalin. Gide, too, exaggerated, in the speech he gave in Red Square at the funeral of the writer: "No Russian writer has been more universally heard. . . . He takes his place beside the greatest."

Tolstoy was a better judge: "The Mother' is worthless." Also Chekhov: "I read the end of 'The Three,' Gorky's novel. It's really outlandish. If it hadn't been written by Gorky, no one would read it." He was a friend of Gorky's



but saw his defects clearly. "Another piece of advice," he wrote him in a letter. "Reading the proofs, delete, wherever possible, the adjectives and adverbs. You use so many adjectives that the reader has a hard time finding his way, and gets tired."

Gorky means "bitter."

"It's bitter!" is the cry (and an order) that resounds continuously during wedding feasts.

"But excuse me, what on earth is this? The herring is bitter . . . and the bread is bitter. One cannot eat!"

All: "It's bitter, it's bitter!" The newlyweds kiss. (Chekhov, "The Wedding.")

The life of Gorky from the age of ten to twenty-four in a very brief autobiographical note: "1878: cobbler's assistant. 1879: apprentice draftsman. 1880: dishwasher on a ship. 1884: errand boy. 1885: baker. 1886: chorus boy in an operetta company. 1887: I try to kill myself. 1890: copyist for a lawyer. 1891: I make a tour of Russia on foot. 1892: I publish my first novel."

It is not the only tumultuous biography of that tumultuous epoch.

Isaac Babel, 1894-1941.

"I have been a soldier on the Romanian front, an employee in the Cheka and in the Commissariat of Public Instruction, I took part in the food requisitions of 1918, served in the Northern Army against General Yudenich, in the First Cavalry Army, and in the Odessa regional Soviet, then I worked as a newspaper reporter in Petersburg and Tiflis and as a copy editor in the 7th Soviet Printing Plant in Odessa, and so on." (Marc Slonim, "Soviet Russian Literature.")

In 1941 he was shot.

Mikhail Zoshchenko, 1895-1958.

"I was a carpenter, a hunter on the island of Nova Zemlya, an apprentice cobbler, a telephone operator, a policeman at the Ligovo station, an agent on the criminal squad, an actor, and again I went as a volunteer to the front with the Red Army.

"Here is an arid list of the events that concern me:

death sentences: one,

wounds: three,

suicides: two,

beatings: three." (Preface to the

Italian translation of "Before the Sunrise.")

Two suicides seems excessive, even for those difficult times. The same



"We're from the 'Times' Styles-section rescue squad."

notes, which also precede the Italian edition of the beautiful "Muscovite Tales" (a strange title for stories that do not take place in Moscow), mention instead "two homicide attempts." Most likely, it is a matter of suicide attempts, as in the case of Gorky.

When it was decided to give back to Gorky Ulitsa (the main street of Moscow) its old name of Tverskaya—that is, the way to Tver—a problem arose: Tverskaya led no longer to Tver but to Kalinin, as Tver had been rebaptized. So Kalinin also got its old name back, and thus the problem was solved.

Dostoyevski was confined at Tver after his years in Siberia and before receiving permission to return to Petersburg, and there he wrote "The Village of Stepanchikovo and Its Inhabitants": after the horrors of the penitentiary, a humorous novel.

The novel's protagonist, Foma Fomich, is a character who could have existed only in the Russia of landed proprietors and serfs: the parasite—"whom Russian literature," Tolstoy says, "holds, no one knows why, in singular contempt, along with Hungarian dance

and generals." Every country estate was at that time a palace that, in addition to numerous servants, cooks, coachmen, nursemaids, cockroaches, and a lack of hygienic arrangements, almost always housed some parasites: poor relations, a type of gentleman or lady deprived of means and incapable of working, maintained by the landowner. They had in common an ostentatious love for the French language (which they thought brought them closer to the nobility), touchiness, and hatred for the peasants. "Gentlemen of easy temper," Dostoyevski describes them, "capable of telling little stories, playing a game of cards, and decidedly opposed to tasks of whatever kind. . . ."

Foma Fomich—that is, Thomas the son of Thomas. Perhaps there is something comic, in Russian, in having the same name as one's father. Like the protagonist of Gogol's "Overcoat," Akaky Akakyevich, and so many of Bulgakov's characters—Filip Filipovich, Poligraf Poligrafovich, Ferapont Ferapontovich, etc.

"Je suis un simple parasite et rien de plus!" says Stepan Trofimovich, the celebrated parasite of "The Devils." Ac-



"Is it my imagination, or has it been an unusually wet summer?"

cording to him, "the Russian countryside, in a thousand years, has given us nothing but the dance of the *Kamarsinski*"; agreeing, in this, with Foma Fomich, who defines that unbridled peasant dance, which inspired Glinka, as "the apotheosis of drunkenness."

One good memory of Stepan Trofimovich remains, in any case: two little verses that, during a railway journey, our parasite "kept stammering, following the sound of the train:

Vek and Vek, and Lev Kambek
Lev Kambek, and Vek and Vek."

The mystery in which the translator has left these verses renders them more attractive, and difficult to forget. Then (unfortunately) everything becomes clear: *Vek* (*The Century*) was the title of a review of that time, and Lev (Leo) Kambek the name of an editor of reviews. Stepan Trofimovich had literary ambitions—like Foma Fomich, who wanted to "refine the customs" of the old servant Gavriil (Gabriel) by teaching him French.

DOSTOYEVSKI liked to draw, as did Victor Hugo—who, along with George Sand, was Dostoyevski's fa-

vorite among foreign writers—and the beloved Pushkin. While he was writing "Prestuplenie i Nakazanie" ("Crime and Punishment"), he drew the faces of his characters on the page. His favorite painting was Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," in the art museum in Dresden. He stood for hours in front of this painting.

When he took pen in hand he often didn't know what he was going to write. "I have absolutely no idea how this novel will turn out," he said while working on "The Gambler" (completed in twenty-six days). Lack of money forced him to write in an inhuman manner: in a hurry, without being able to reread, make corrections—"under the whip."

He worked at night and got up at eleven.

When he began his first novel, "Poor Folk," he had no literary acquaintances except D. V. Grigorovich, who up to that point had written only one article: "The Hurdy-Gurdy Player of Petersburg."

Dostoyevski was considered an author of outstanding serial novels. "A master of bad style," said Truman Capote. He wrote clichés without hesitation: "His teeth were like

SEPTEMBER 14, 1992

pearls, his lips of coral."

He deemed Levin the main character of "Anna Karenina."

He loved eel, white Rhine wine, sweets (the Ballet pastry shop, in Petersburg, was his favorite).

He loved the cathedral of Milan, and punctuality: when he set a time for an appointment he always added, "Neither before nor after."

When he rode in a carriage he would talk to the coachman.

He wrote, "Or is it possible that man doesn't want well-being?"

TOLSTOY—which an acquaintance of the writer Flaiano pronounced as if it were a French name, Tolstwa—is not to be confused, of course, with Count Aleksei Tolstoy, the wealthiest Soviet writer.

According to Slonim, he "had even kept his old valet, who, as the story went in Moscow, used to answer the telephone: 'His Highness is at the Central Committee of the Communist Party.'"

The wooden house that Tolstoy bought in Moscow on Dolgo-Khamovnicheski (now Krapotkinskaya) Ulitsa, which today is the Tolstoy Museum, and one of the last wooden houses remaining in Moscow, did not have a bath. Instead of having one built, Tolstoy went once a week to the public baths. A foreign visitor reports that he smelled of cypress wood. (Similarly, the old servant of Lavretsky, in Turgenev's "Home of the Gentry," standing behind his master's chair at dinner-time, scattered around "a musty scent reminiscent of cypress wood.") Tolstoy had made his study in the basement, and he wrote by the light of a single candle. He did not wear glasses. When he was tired of writing sitting down, he moved his work to a high shelf and wrote standing, like Peter the Great. When he married, he no longer had any teeth. His cook had to make special dishes for him, different from those for the rest of the family and the guests. The cook was called Nikolai Mikhailo-

vich and was a former flute player. He baked some excellent hot pastries, which he made rise by blowing air into them, not through a straw but directly with his mouth, as if he were playing the flute. They were called "sighs of Nikolai." When he died, he was succeeded by his son Semyon, who prepared for Tolstoy exclusively vegetarian dishes.

One has the idea that Tolstoy was born before Dostoyevski, while in fact he was seven years younger: it was only that he aged more. Until the age of eighty he always went on horseback. His last horse was called Delirium. He knew horses better than anyone else. He spoke to them. He could read the tiredness in the eye of an old horse. He wrote the best story about a horse: "Kholstomer."

When he died, at Astapovo, the painter Leonid Pasternak came from Moscow to make a portrait of him. He brought along, as his assistant, his twenty-year-old son, Boris.

THE family of the last czar, Nicholas II, formed a handsome photographic group. Good-looking, elegant, clean, without bugs. Their intelligence—unfortunately, in a time when much was needed—was limited. The writer most admired by the Empress Alexandra and her lady companions was, says Nabokov, Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

When their bones were found, one saw that the family was complete, including even Anastasia. Beside the skeletons of the Czar, the Czarina, and their five children were found others, among them that of a dog (certainly not called Sharik), who had faithfully followed his masters to Ekaterinburg, and that of their cook.

Perhaps, during the bitter time of imprisonment, the cook had tried to distract Nicholas II from the nightmare of the future by bringing him at table his favorite dish: roast suckling pig with horseradish sauce.

BADENWEILER, Germany, Villa Friederike, 2 July 1904. Dr. Schwöhrer had a good idea: "He had a bottle of champagne brought up. Chekhov took the glass that was offered to him and said, 'It's been such a long time since I drank champagne.' He emptied the glass and lay on his side. After a little he breathed no more."

The Russians light a candle beside a person who is about to die. When death arrives they put out the candle. Even Dostoyevski, foreseeing that moment, asked his wife to light a candle for him. On the eyes, closed forever, two five-kopeck pieces are placed. The dead person is laid not on a bed but on a table, which is closer than a bed to the idea the Russian has of sleeping, and then he is transported to the cemetery in an open casket. On returning from the cemetery the survivors refresh themselves by eating *kutya*—rice cooked with honey, crushed nuts, and raisins.

IV

I WAS born just in time to see the Russia of Chekhov. It was at the home of my paternal grandmother, in Sondrio, on the Piazzini Prospect, where my grandmother, who was a widow, lived, looked after by a servant (a serf) named Caterina, a good woman, more patient than a Russian with the capriciousness of her mistress, who was very proud of her aristocratic title. Caterina lived in the house as part of the family, without receiving any wages, like Lenchen, the faithful servant of Marx.

In the courtyard, where the stalls for the horses were and the coach houses and perhaps even a sleigh, lived another serf, of whom I remember only his nickname: Patato (probably not even he remembered his name or surname). Patato did whatever jobs his masters ordered him to do, contenting himself with bread and soup, an occasional glass of wine, some cast-off clothes, a space under the stairs where he slept, and a toilet that Frate Indovino would have called "very ... Russian."

A story was told of Patato that once, in recompense for a job he had done, Caterina had offered him a glass of Sassella wine, pouring it absent-mindedly into a glass in which she had left an egg white. Patato drank the wine in a gulp, as was his custom, and gave back the glass with a strange expression of uncertainty on his face. Asked by Caterina if the wine was not good, he said, "It's sort of hard." A response become proverbial, which, now that he is dead, is all that remains of Patato on this earth.

—ALDO BUZZI

(Translated, from the Italian,
by Ann Goldstein.)

The talk of Paris

The year was 1969.

The world stared transfixed at the moon, where man was taking his first small step.

The fashion underground was talking about a new perfume that had quietly surfaced in Paris.

It was fresh but not virginal. Bold but never aggressive. It had what the French call "presence."

Today, this classic is still very much with us, despite an advertising expenditure that wouldn't keep Colette in stickpins.

But then, classics never need the trumpet's blare. Just women who are sure in their taste.



ANNALS OF THE FORMER WORLD

ASSEMBLING CALIFORNIA—II

WITH the geologist Eldridge Moores, of the University of California, Davis, I have been traversing California since the nineteen-seventies, with intent to sketch a kind of cross-section of the state in the region of Sacramento and San Francisco. Moores is a specialist in ophiolites—the rock column below the deep-ocean floor—and when we encountered such rock in Auburn, thirty-five miles east of Sacramento in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, he acted like a miner in the presence of newfound gold. The rock was more than five hundred miles from the nearest abyssal plain. It was part of an oceanic package that geologists call the Smartville Block. To understand how it was transported from deep ocean to the middle of California was to understand how California had—from various exotic parts—been assembled. While Moores was very pleased to find the ophiolitic rock at Auburn, he was not surprised. There in the country of California gold, he had found the suite of ocean rock—in sequence from pillow basalts and vertical sheets of diabase down through plagiogranites and gabbros to mantle peridotites and serpentines—in other places.

MOORES had become aware of the unusual rocks in the Sierra foothills only four years before I met him. On a spring day in 1974, he and his family left Davis for a camping trip in the mountains, and instead of following their usual route, up the Feather River, they took a right at Yuba City and went into the canyon of the Yuba. The theory of plate tectonics was six years old. Eight more years would pass before the term “exotic terrane” would be coined.

Geologists, caught up in the fresh intensity of a scientific revolution, were still at the beginnings of seeing the world anew. Few people then envisioned the western United States as a collection of lithospheric driftwood. Moores, however, had worked for some years in Macedonia, struggling to understand the large unrooted masses of mantle rock that lay there on the surface as mountains, and to relate it to the stratiform gabbros, plagiogranites, and sheeted dikes nearby. With Fred Vine, of the University of East Anglia, he had also worked in the Troodos Mountains of Cyprus, where sheeted diabase ran on for seventy miles, and where the gabbros, the granites, and capping marine sediments were present as well. Moores and Vine decided that the whole assemblage had somehow been removed from a blue-ocean setting and emplaced upon the African slope. In 1971, they published in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal*

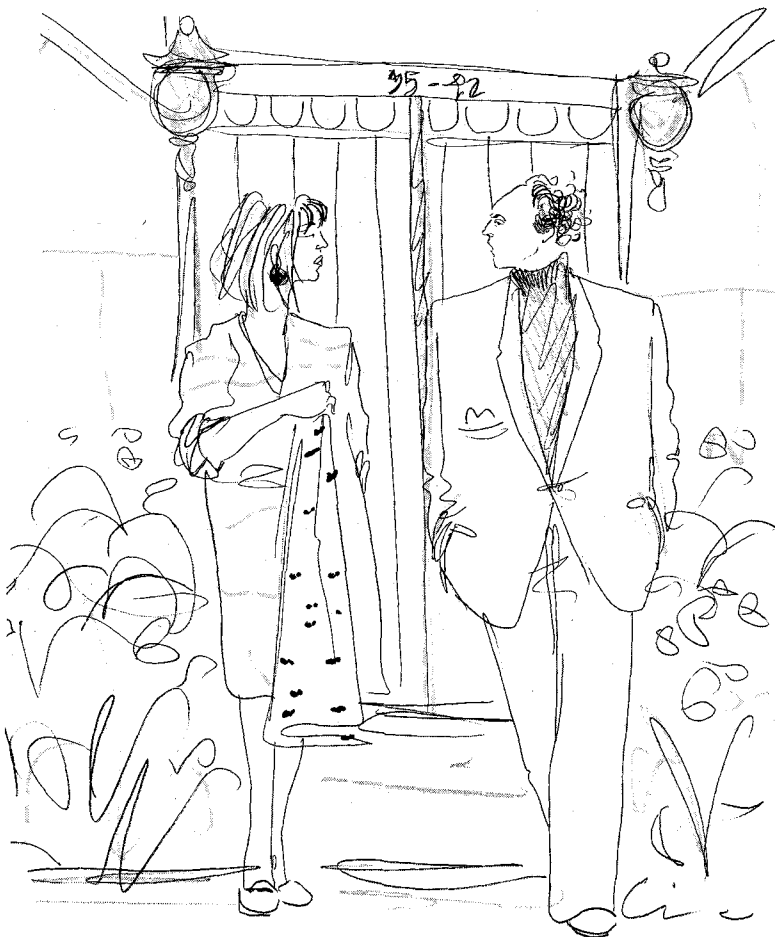
Society (London) an establishing paper, the significance of which was expressed in its title: “The Troodos Massif, Cyprus, and Other Ophiolites as Oceanic Crust.”

Between the Great Valley and the High Sierra, the Yuba drainage lay in the geographic center of what was not yet known as the Smartville Block. Moores wasn't there to do geology. All he was trying to do was to go uphill out of the oak woodland and into the ponderosas, a task to which his micro-powered microbus was almost unequal. It chugged, and—among the brown grasses of a dry country—the rock at the roadside passed slowly. At work or play, a geologist always drives like Egyptian painting—eyes to the side. Near the tributary Dry Creek, about ten miles north of the Yuba, the microbus ascended a particularly formidable incline between high roadcut walls of a dark and igneous rock. Moores did not stop, but the hair on

his arm may have moved. He remembers feeling that he could have been in Macedonia. More emphatically, in Cyprus.

On the geologic map of California, the lithology of that area was vaguely described as “Jura-Triassic meta-volcanic rocks.” The eye sees what it is trained to see. Or, according to a maxim that Moores often quotes, “the eye seldom sees what the mind does not anticipate.” When Moores returned to that roadcut with a lens in his hand, he did not need it. He found—one standing beside the next beside the next beside the next—classic sheets of sparkling diabase, each with a glassy margin, all in prime condition, undeformed.

The sheeted dikes that he would later find on Interstate 80 at Au-



“Sharon comes with some wonderful baggage.”

burn were deformed in the Smartville suture almost beyond recognition. These in the Yuba Valley were well back of Smartville's impacted leading edge. When he and I stopped there once, he said, "You could look at hand specimens of rocks taken from this cut and not be able to say if they were from Cyprus, Pakistan, Oman, New Guinea, Newfoundland, or California. Only by dating and by detailed chemical analysis of minor elements can you tell them apart." From Auburn Dam north to Oroville, there is a continual exposure of forty miles of these sequential laminations of seafloor spreading.

I asked him if he could say from what distance and what western compass point the Smartville Block had come.

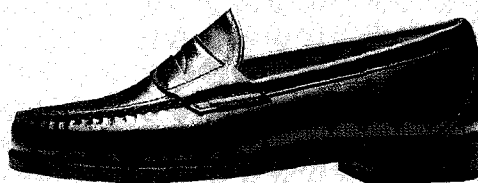
"No," he said. "We have tried doing paleomagnetic work, but so far it's inconclusive. The Smartville arc probably developed not more than a thousand kilometres from North America. It probably came from the northwest."

In altitude, the Smartville Block rises roughly from zero to five thousand feet. To move about on its small roads is to move among zones of time that are not all written in rock. U-2s drop out of the stratosphere and hang-glide into Beale Air Force Base while you walk up a dry streambed at Oregon House, where placers were first panned in 1850, in a valley of sheeted diabase that was injected into the floor of the North Pacific Ocean about a hundred and seventy-five million years ago and emplaced on California five million years after that. The ophiolite—the whole vast assemblage of transported deep-ocean rock—now rests on California like a ship stuck in sand, listing thirty degrees to the west. The ophiolite tilts more steeply than the slope of the Sierra. Therefore, as you climb the modern foothills, geologically you go downsection, ever deeper into the former seafloor, from the spreading rift to the granites and gabbros of the magma chamber that fed it, and on to the cumulate layers of heavy crystals that settled on the mantle at the boundary that is known in the science as the Moho. On up the mountains (and farther downsection) are scattered serpentines derived from the mantle itself. Where the rock has not been folded, the descent of the ophiolite is as clear as it is complete. It is the perverseness not of the science but of the earth itself that you



"To make a shoe this comfortable, there is only one way to look at leather. My Dad's way."

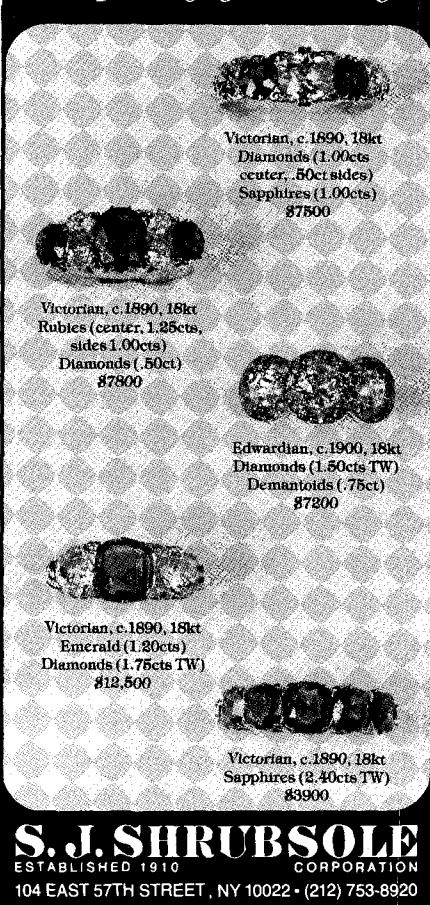
Like his father, Dan Marshall takes a hands-on approach to leather. He looks for consistent color and character, and uniform grain texture. He feels for the break that will allow each shoe to retain its look and fit year after year. He knows there are no short cuts to the one-shoe-at-a-time comfort of Sebago Classics. Like father, like son.




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often go downsection when you are going uphill.

In the other direction, the ocean-crustal rock that lay above the sheeted dikes is in the foothills also. Below Timbuctoo Bend on the Yuba, for example, a green ledge of what appear to be massed satin pillows reaches into the fast clear river. Notwithstanding the boulder fields of hydraulic-mining tailings which cover the floodplain and extend out of sight downstream, it is a place of such appeal that you reflexively reach for a fly rod, or look around for a place to pitch a tent. Whereas the pillows at Auburn are so extensively crushed that only a specialist can re-assemble them in the eye, the pillows of Timbuctoo are rotated but undamaged. Each about two feet in diameter, they are simple in form, elegant, ovate—a spread of huge caviar. Nowhere on land, Moores said, will you see pillow lavas more perfect than these.

Timbuctoo was a placer camp in 1849. When Moores and I first stopped there, in the nineteen-seventies, we read these words on a wall of a roofless masonry building:

GOLD DUST BOUGHT
WELLS FARGO & BROTHERS

And, barely legible in fading paint, "Stewart Brothers have for sale dry-goods, boots and shoes, ready-made clothing, groceries and provisions." That structure was all there was of Timbuctoo, where twelve hundred people lived in the eighteen-fifties. Now there is even less. The Wells Fargo building has collapsed. One masonry corner juts chimneylike above the rubble. The words are gone, and only a hill beside the river retains an indelible scar, torn out by hydraulic mining as if by rapid landslide.

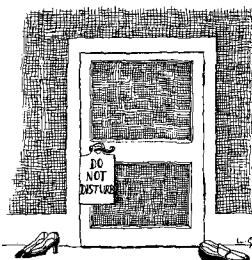
In or close to the magma chambers under oceanic spreading centers, seawater, which has descended through fissures, dissolves metals (copper, silver, iron, magnesium, gold); it carries the metals upward and precipitates them on top of the new rock. If the new rock, in its migration, happens to end up on a continent, the metal comes with it. In the suturing process, faults form. Deeply circulating groundwater redissolves the metals and redeposits them in quartz veins in the faults. In this way, Moores said, it made sense to imagine that the

Mother Lode gold of California came in from the deep ocean riding the Smartville Block.

Smartville, California, is a living town, 95977. It is just uphill from Sucker Flat and a mile from Timbuctoo. Sucker Flat was named for Illinois. The miners looked upon Illinois as "the Sucker State." Jim Smart, of Smartville, was not from Illinois, and he was smart enough not to be a miner. He ran a hotel. Never mind that the Sucker Flat Channel, between Timbuctoo and Smartville, yielded two and a half million dollars in gold. There is a white wooden church in Smartville, its paint peeling. There are two gas pumps under a sign that says "Bait." There are slopes of brown grass under blue oaks—and the houses of a hundred and fifty people. Roadcuts in Smartville are full of bulging pillows.

In the roadcuts of Rough and Ready, nine miles from Smartville, we saw massive gabbros. Rough and Ready was founded by forty-niners, and its citizens soon voted to secede from the union. If geologists of the nineteenth century and the first three-quarters of the twentieth century failed to see the intrinsic bond between the gabbros of Rough and Ready and the pillow basalts of Smartville and Timbuctoo (and the relationship of those rocks to the diabase and plagiogranite and serpentine nearby), Moores was sympathetic. He said, "If you found a headlight, a hubcap, a brake drum, and a radiator, you would say, 'Ah, pieces of an automobile.' But if you had never seen

those things assembled you would not relate them to each other. The ophiolitic sequence is one of the most classic things of importance to the plate-tectonics story. Its emplacement is evidence of the spreading process and of the subduction process,

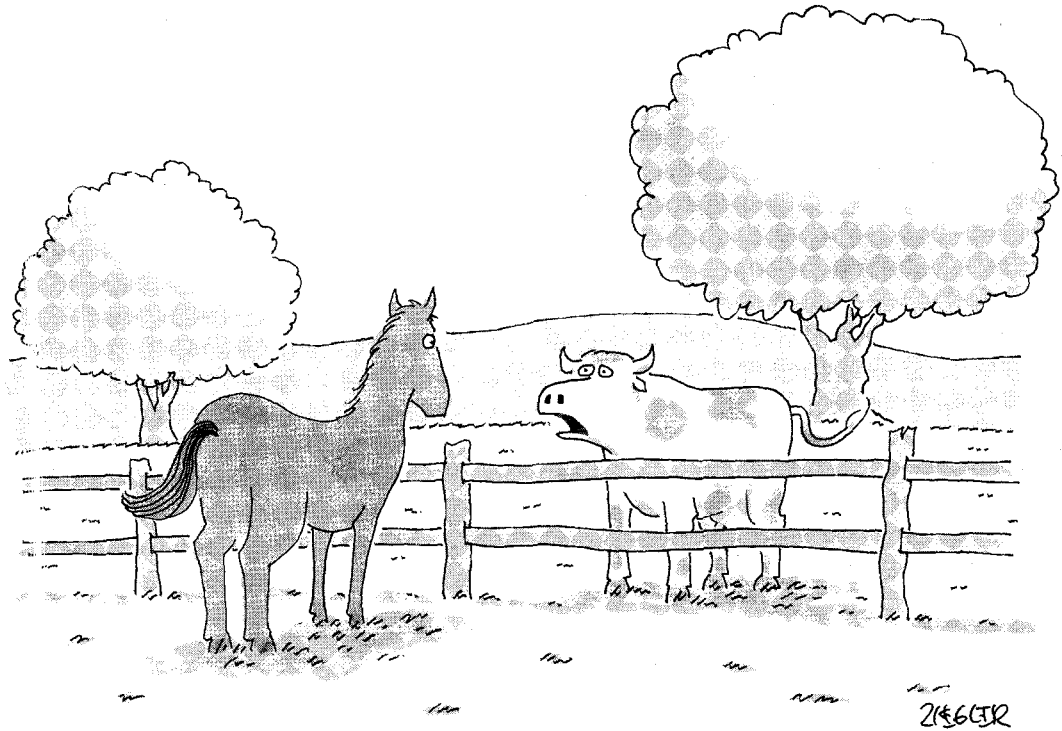


not to mention the consumption of vast amounts of ocean crust. There are ten thousand square miles of ground here with no one arguing about the fact that it's island-arc material. The original arc may or may not have been the size of Japan, or the Philippines, or the Marianas, or the Antilles, or the Aleutians. But it was surely an island arc, and its arrival is signalled by these ophiolitic rocks. If ophiolites are found at the suture of the Urals—as they are—it means that there was a sea

between Siberia and Europe. The sea was consumed. Ophiolites were emplaced. And the Urals are welded in a Permo-Triassic suture. Before the Permo-Triassic, in the sea and the islands, the Gulag Archipelago was real."

Moore was doing post-doctoral work at Princeton University, in the middle nineteen-sixties, when he first heard about what was described to him as "a wonderful complex on Cyprus," but when he tried to look it up he could find no data. He requested, from Nicosia, memoirs of the Cyprus Geological Survey. This was at the time when the theory of plate tectonics was in its coalescing phase. The term itself did not yet exist. Oceanic spreading centers were known, and the consumption of ocean crust in subduction zones was beginning to be understood. The idea of a suite of rock called an ophiolite had been around in the science for many years but had not yet been widely accepted or related to the new theory. As the story of plate tectonics further unfolded, the story of the ophiolitic sequence would accompany it like an echo.

Fred Vine, who was also working at Princeton at the time, had co-authored with his Cambridge University colleague Drummond Matthews a paper that contributed the manifesting insight into the movement of the ocean crust and placed Vine and Matthews among the handful of people in various parts of the world who collectively brought about the plate-tectonics revolution. Vine and Matthews compared data collected by seaborne magnetometers with the known history of reversals of the magnetic field of the earth. In the last hundred million years, the magnetic pole has jumped from north to south and back again nearly two hundred times. It has remained in the one place or the other for highly varying lengths of time—as much as twenty million years and as little as twenty thousand. Derived from paleomagnetic evidence taken from the rock of continents, this peculiar time scale was aligned by Vine and Matthews with



"I've been a cow all my life, honey. Don't ask me to change now."

zones of strong and weak magnetism that could be mapped on seafloors using the data collected by the magnetometers. Expressed as units of time, the polar reversals and the zones of seafloor magnetism matched exactly. Under the ocean, evidently, time had two arrows, whose points touched at the mid-ocean ridge. With bilateral symmetry, the seafloor grew older with distance from its spreading center.

When Moore's packet arrived from Cyprus, he already had behind him three years' experience in Macedonia among the lower components of ophiolitic rock, but he had not sensed their origins. He had not imagined that they had formed in one milieu and been transported to another. Like most geologists, he thought of them as rocks formed from magmas that had welled up under Greece. Opening a geologic map of Cyprus, he saw diabase dikes all running in the same direction; he saw mantle-derived serpentine at the bottom of the section and basaltic pillows at the top. This time, his imagination made the jump. Unfolding the map in front of Fred Vine, he said, "How does this look for oceanic crust formed at a spreading center?"

In the science, the ancestral glimmers of that intuition were nearly a century old. By the eighteen-eighties, geologists had begun to reflect on a

common association of serpentine, gabbro, diabase, and basalt; and in "The Face of the Earth," Eduard Suess, of Vienna, observed that all these "green rocks," as he called them, could characteristically be found in folded-and-faulted mountains. He said that they had formed in the geosynclines from which the mountains derived.

In 1892, when the German geologist Gustav Steinmann visited San Francisco, Berkeley's Andrew Lawson took him to the north side of the bridgeless Golden Gate to see the rocks of Marin. (Moore came upon this remarkable account while he was reading Steinmann in German in 1967.) Steinmann had wandered the Apennines and Alps noticing serpentines, pillow lavas, and radiolarian chert—always in that order, upsection. Now, in Marin, he said to Lawson, "These rocks are the same." There were solid cliffs of red chert, and pillow lavas as well. On the San Francisco side of the strait was a headland of serpentine. Steinmann commented that since the chert was stratigraphically at the top of the sequence the whole assembly must have come from deep sea. In 1905, Steinmann published a definitive study of the same three rock types threading through the Alps. They became known in the science as the Steinmann Trinity.

In 1838, the Scottish philosopher

Test your knowledge of CFCs and natural gas air conditioning.

Q

1. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are the primary cause of:
A. Acid rain B. Upper-level ozone depletion
C. Contaminated water D. All of the above

2. Refrigeration and cooling—in vehicles, homes, businesses and industrial processes—are responsible for about 40% of global CFC production. Of this amount, production for commercial and industrial use represents:
A. 15% B. 25% C. 40% D. 60%

3. Natural gas heats, but it can also cool—and save money. Gas cooling systems are least expensive to operate in the:
A. Summer B. Fall C. Winter D. Spring

A

1. Answer: B. CFCs have been linked to the depletion of the ozone layer in the upper atmosphere. This allows more damaging ultraviolet rays to reach the earth. To protect us, we need sunscreens and common sense; to protect the ozone layer, we need to reduce CFCs. One major source: electric air conditioning systems. One alternative: natural gas absorption type cooling systems which use water and salt instead of CFCs. Gas cooling systems can reduce energy costs without depleting the ozone layer.

2. Answer: D. According to preliminary EPA estimates of domestic CFC emissions, home refrigerators and freezers contribute more than 5,000 metric tons annually, while cold storage represents 8,000 tons, retail food refrigeration more than 12,000 and industrial processes nearly 30,000. Protecting the ozone layer will require a major global effort to reduce CFC use in commerce and industry.

3. Answer: A. Gas cooling systems benefit from a fortuitous coincidence: natural gas prices are the lowest in the summer, just when air conditioning often pushes electricity costs to their annual peak. Because annual electricity costs are often calculated based on peak demand, switching to natural gas cooling can often result in year-long savings. It's not always possible to save money while protecting the environment, but when it is, why not look for the natural solution—natural gas!

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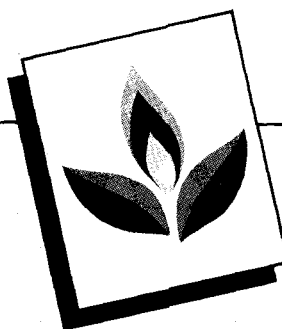
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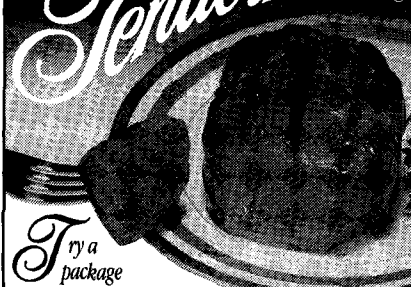


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Thomas Dick, of County Angus, had published his "Celestial Scenery; or, The Wonders of the Planetary System Displayed; Illustrating the Perfections of the Deity and a Plurality of Worlds," in which the movements on the earth's surface that eventually became known as continental drift and plate tectonics were—as far as is known—first proposed. Dick noted how neatly western Africa could lock itself tight around the horn of Brazil, "and Nova Scotia and Newfoundland would block up a portion of the Bay of Biscay and the English Channel, while Great Britain and Ireland would block up the entrance to Davis's Straits." Such an assembly would "form one compact continent." And "a consideration of these circumstances renders it not altogether improbable that these continents were originally conjoined, and that at some former physical revolution or catastrophe they may have been rent asunder by some tremendous power, when the waters of the ocean rushed in between them, and left them separated as we now behold them." I am indebted to Alan Goodacre, of the Geological Survey of Canada, for this high-assay nugget, which he reported in a letter to *Nature* in 1991, backdating by three-quarters of a century the continental-drift hypothesis attributed in textbooks to the German meteorologist Alfred Wegener. Of the two, Dick fared better, for while his proposition achieved no significant attention, Wegener's won a considerable fame that rapidly decayed into notoriety. In 1915, Wegener published "Die Entstehung der Kontinente und Ozeane," in which he based his concept not only on the jigsaw fit of Africa and the Americas but also on the likeness of certain rocks on the two sides of the ocean, and on comparisons of living and fossil creatures. For half a century, Wegener—in life and in death—was a target of scorn. His idea provoked gibes, jeers, sneers, derision, raillery, burlesque, mockery, irony, satire, and sarcasm, but it could not be ignored. In 1928, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists published a symposium on continental drift. It included a paper called "Some of the Objections to Wegener's Theory," by Rollin T. Chamberlin, of the University of Chicago, who expressed what was then the prevailing attitude among

geologists and would continue to be until the nineteen-seventies, after which it would cease to prevail but not to survive:

Wegener's hypothesis in general is of the foot-loose type, in that it takes considerable liberty with our globe, and is less bound by restrictions or tied down by awkward, ugly facts than most of its rival theories. Its appeal seems to lie in the fact that it plays a game in which there are few restrictive rules and no sharply drawn code of conduct. So a lot of things go easily. But taking the situation as it now is, we must either modify radically most of the present rules of the geological game or else pass the hypothesis by. The best characterization of the hypothesis which I have heard was a remark made at the 1922 meeting of the Geological Society of America at Ann Arbor. It was this: "If we are to believe Wegener's hypothesis we must forget everything which has been learned in the last 70 years and start all over again."

No one, for the time being, connected the Steinmann Trinity to Wegener's drift. For about four decades, the two ideas hung on to the trailing edge of the science, with no one suspecting that Wegener's idea would effloresce as a scientific paradigm, or that the ophiolite story (the advanced edition of the Steinmann Trinity) would, thereafter, provide the chapter headings to the plate-tectonic history of the world.

There were hints. In 1936, Harry Hess, of Princeton, whose "History of Ocean Basins" would—in 1960—introduce the spreading seafloor and begin the new tectonic story, gave a paper in Moscow in which he related Alpine peridotites to island arcs and called this "a contribution to the ophiolite problem." The ophiolite problem was manifold. Most geologists did not accept the association of such disparate

rocks. The few who did asked elemental and unanswerable questions: Are the rocks in their original place? If not, where have they come from and how



did they move? Peridotite, which in alteration becomes serpentine, is now seen to be of the deepest origin of any rock found at the earth's surface. It is now thought to be rock of the earth's mantle, and few disagree. Hess had studied two belts of Alpine-type peridotites in the Appalachians. He asserted that they were not just garden-variety igneous rocks that had come up as magma under existing Appalachians but rock that had intruded much earlier, on the edges of a geosyncline. Hess went on to say that peridotites seemed to be introduced in the initial

phases of mountain-building—and not thereafter. He said they were cold, intact, and solid as they came up in the rising mountains—that they had been, in other words, tectonically emplaced. Hess was describing a collision between a continent and an oceanic subduction zone, but in 1936 he didn't know it. In Moores' words, "This is the clearest example I know of of a guy saying the right thing for the wrong reason. Hess said this was the most important event in the forming of the Appalachians, this 'intrusion' in the Ordovician. It was. But plate tectonics did it."

By 1955, the burst of data that had come with the ocean-exploration programs of the Cold War had yielded—in the work of Russell Raitt, of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, and Maurice Ewing and Bruce Heezen, of Columbia University—the first descriptions of ocean crust to be derived from seismic refraction. Everywhere, the ocean crust seemed to be some sort of package—a once molten but nonetheless zoned assembly, in three general bands.

The German geologist W. P. de Roever was the first to imagine rock of the earth's mantle in the thin air of the Alps. In a 1957 paper, he said that the Alpine peridotites appear to be solid intrusions; they have deformed fabrics; they appear to be coming up from the mantle. For "solid intrusions" you could read "emplacements from elsewhere." In their deformed fabrics you could see that they had been moved. How they had been moved remained unclear.

In 1959, Jan Brunn, who had mapped the Vourinos ophiolitic complex in Macedonia, published an abstract in French in which he compared ophiolites to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. He was the first person ever to suggest that the ophiolites of the aerial world were similar to crust found at mid-ocean ridges. He compared ophiolitic rocks to dredged rocks. All this was before seafloor spreading was recognized, and no one noticed the work of Brunn. But it was Brunn who took the Steinmann Trinity and the ophiolitic sequence out of the Oz of geosynclines and placed them in the center of the widening oceans.

Over the next nine years (1960-68) appeared the twenty-odd scientific papers reporting the plate-tectonics story: that plates are essentially rigid, and deform at their boundaries; that all plates include

ocean crust, and generally a very large amount of it (the continents are passengers on the plates); that new seafloor moves away from a spreading center until it goes down into a trench to be consumed; that plates sliding past each other (as at San Francisco) do so in strike-slip sporadic jumps; that ocean crust colliding with continental crust can pry up something like the Andes; that continental crust hitting continental crust will build Himalayas, Urals, Appalachians, and Alps.

While these novel facts were still for the most part unknown, Moores, in Macedonia in the early nineteen-sixties, was becoming thoroughly at home with the petrology and structure of the Vourinos Complex, about thirty miles west of Mt. Olympus. Brunn's ideas notwithstanding, Moores thought of the Vourinos rocks as homegrown—in his words, "a partially molten diapiric blob." Diapirs are bodies of rock shaped more or less like hot-air balloons, and balloonlike they rise, crashing their way into the country rock above them. Harry Hess, one of Moores' supervisors, went to Greece to inspect his work. Hess was already in the process of abandoning the geosyncline and shedding the old geology like old skin. He decided that the Vourinos rock had formed in an oceanic environment, and probably at a spreading center. Moores, clinging to what he had been taught (by, among others, Hess), decided that Hess was crazy.

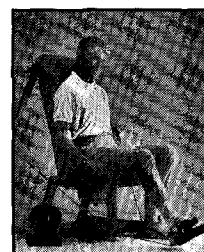
Moores' conservatism can be understood in the light of the disregard in which ophiolites were generally held in the United States at that time. When a graduate student at Stanford, doing field work not far from the university, suggested that the local sediments had been deposited on an ophiolitic complex, the Geology Department specifically forbade him to use the word "ophiolite" in a Ph.D. thesis. The professors explained that ophiolites were a wild European idea, clearly wrong—and, in any case, not applicable to California.

The concept of the spreading seafloor had gained acceptance by 1966, when Moores first saw the geologic map of Cyprus. Moores and Vine prepared to go there, but had to wait, because of the political tension in the six-year-old country. They worked there in 1968 and 1969. The evidence was convincing that Cyprus was essen-

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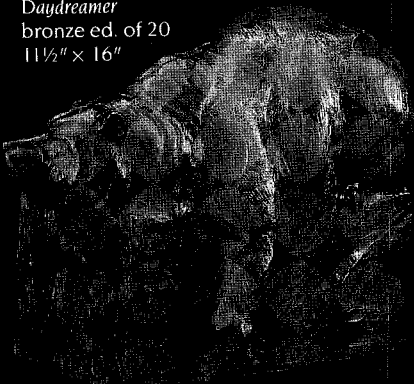
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tially a piece of ocean crust, thrust up in some way and now aerially exposed. Moores and Vine's paper, which has influenced all subsequent understanding of ocean crust, was the first to establish ophiolites as ocean-floor remnants, for the most part formed by spreading processes. This odd collection of rocks ranging from water-cooled lavas to mantle blocks, so difficult to explain in continental settings, could now be seen not as ordinary igneous formations but as tectonic features that had moved from one place to another in the course of epic alterations of landscape.

In Pacific Grove, California, at the end of 1969, a Penrose conference on "The Meaning of the New Global Tectonics" drew structural geologists from all over the world. William Dickinson, of Stanford, dismantled the geosyncline and assigned its parts to various aspects of plate tectonics—collisions, island arcs, abyssal plains, mélanges, trenches, transform faults. Moores describes the conference as "a watershed of geology—that was when people really began to realize how important plate tectonics was." Listening to Dickinson, he thought of all the ophiolitic and volcanic-island rock that he was seeing in the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Ranges, and it occurred to him that these mountain systems could be understood in terms of island arcs accreting. The arrival times of ophiolites could date successive mountain-building events. In his words, "Recognition of the fact that ophiolite emplacement had to be by the collision process meant that you could explain the western part of the United States by that kind of sequence. That idea came to me on the last morning of the Penrose conference in 1969, and I wrote it down: the idea that you could explain the progressive eugeosyncline-miogeosyncline development and the progressive orogenies that you see in western North America as a series of island-arc complexes—the things we call terranes—that have collided with the continent. I was so excited I could hardly sit still for several days—in fact, for a couple of weeks after that. I came back to Davis all bubbling over." Before long, he had sent a paper to *Nature*. It appeared in 1970 and was the first to suggest the collisional assembling of California and of

vast related portions of the North American Plate.

The idea that California is in large part a collection and compaction of oceanic islands was a reverberation of an ancient myth as well as a development in a science. For at least two thousand years, people described certain undiscovered islands with a force of imagination that became belief. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, such islands appeared on global maps, and when navigation revealed that

they were not where they were said to be cartographers moved the islands to new locations in unexplored seas—the Fortunate Isles, for example, and the Seven Cities of Cibola, and the Lost Atlantis. One such island was California, a utopia of the western Atlantic Ocean. It

is described as follows in "Las Sergas de Esplandián," a Spanish romance published in 1508:

Know, then, that, on the right hand of the Indies, there is an island called California, very close to the side of the Terrestrial Paradise, and it was peopled by black women, without any man among them, for they lived in the fashion of Amazons. They were of strong and hardy bodies, of ardent courage and great force. Their island was the strongest in all the world, with its steep cliffs and rocky shores. Their arms were all of gold, and so was the harness of the wild beasts which they tamed and rode. For, in the whole island, there was no metal but gold.

The wild beasts were griffins—half lion, half eagle—which the women rode through the air into battle, and which they trapped as fledglings. To the griffins they fed the voyaging men who came their way, and their own male infants. Ruling California was the "mighty Queen, Calafia . . . the most beautiful of all of them, of blooming years." (Translation by Edward Everett Hale.)

With an eye on the new tectonics, the paleontologist James W. Valentine, of the University of California, Davis, worked out a curve of the distribution of marine-invertebrate families across Phanerozoic time (the past six hundred million years). He saw the diversity of creatures expand, decline, rise again. The thought occurred to him that if numerous small continents were spread around the world in fair proximity to the equator one would expect the diversity of life to be very high, whereas if continental masses should happen to be clustered (and



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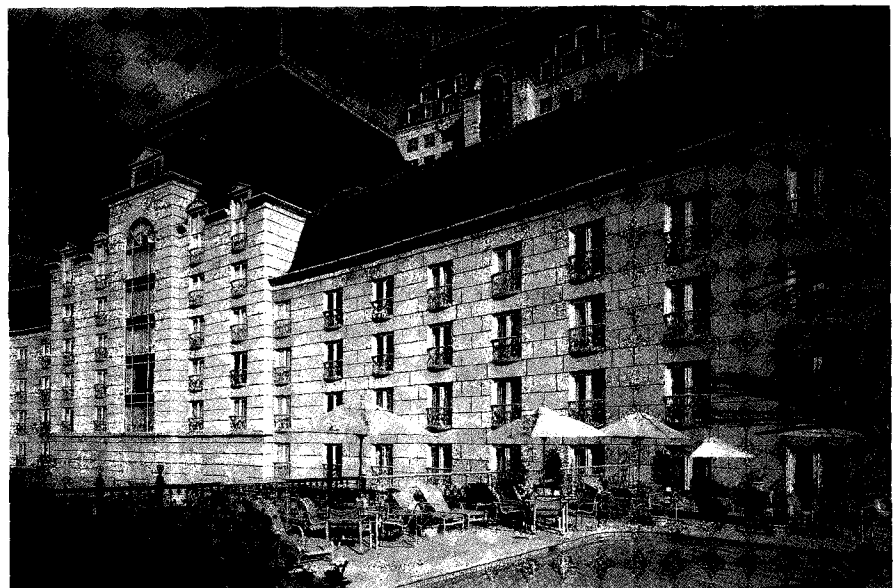
Executive Chef, Rosewood, is the heart of the hotel's reputation for excellence in cuisine. The hotel's catering services reflect Rosewood's reputation for excellence in cuisine.

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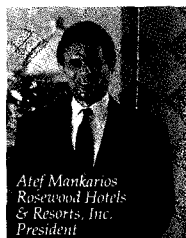
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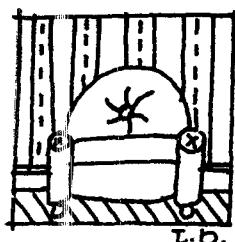
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especially if they were clustered around a pole) diversity should be very low. A typical Valentine graph showed creatures from continental shelves starting out at a very low level of diversity in late Precambrian and early Cambrian time, coming up to a high level in mid-Paleozoic time, then crashing at the end of the Permian, and then rising again. Valentine showed his graphs to Moores, and said, "I wonder if you can explain these patterns of diversity in terms of continental drift and redistribution of land."

Among the results of this dialogue were papers by Valentine and Moores in *Nature* (1970) and the *Journal of Geology* (1972). The title of the second one was "Global Tectonics and the Fossil Record." The concept of continental drift had always implied the preexistence of a supercontinent, which Wegener had called Pangaea. After all, if Australia and Africa and the Americas and Eurasia spread apart from their obvious fit, they had to have been together in the first place. The first place—according to the newly determined vectors of the lithospheric plates—was two hundred million years ago, when Pangaea began to split into Laurasia and Gondwanaland. In the second place, they split farther, to sketch the present globe. Valentine's diversity patterns were in harmony with this story: the greater the breakup of landmasses, the more diverse the fossil families. Moores looked at mountain belts that had come into existence hundreds of millions of years before the dispersal of Pangaea. If the new theory worked, it would work not only forward in time but backward. Gradually, he reassembled Paleozoic and Precambrian continents—not only the continents that



came together to create Pangaea but also the continents that came together to create an earlier supercontinent, which no one had thought of before. Moores and Valentine called it Protopangaea, or Pangaea Minus One. Since agglomerations and dispersals of terrane seemed to be cyclical in nature, there may have been who knows how many supercontinents before Protopangaea. The new theory was like a stable and inventive structure built in the mind of a composer in advance of a composition, but there were those who didn't like what they heard. "Global

Tectonics and the Fossil Record" was attempting to demonstrate how continental drift affects evolution, and it succeeded in enraging no small number of geologists and paleontologists, who felt that Moores, especially, and other "plate-tectonics boys" were ignoring phenomena like ocean currents in their headlong lust to write all aspects of the geologic pageant into the plate-tectonic model. But in 1978 Patrick Morel and Ted Irving, of Canada's Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources, presented paleomagnetic evidence for Pangaea Minus One.

Moores and Valentine also sensed a relationship between plate-tectonic history and the history of the level of the sea. Moores explained, "If you look at the stratigraphic record on platforms such as the mid-continent of the United States, you see times of high stands of the seas, when the continent was nearly submerged, and times of really low stands of the seas. Could that be related to continental drift? Take an average ocean basin and add a hot and voluminous spreading ridge. You will diminish the volume of the ocean basin and force water up over the continents. Conversely, if ridges die for some reason—lose their heat and collapse, or otherwise disappear—that will increase the volume of ocean basins and allow seawater to drain off the continents. The ocean's transgressions and regressions seem to represent seafloor spreading going on or not going on. Others worked on this before we did, but we extended it back to the Cambrian-Precambrian boundary. In the geologic record, you see a great regression of seas in late Precambrian time, then transgression in Cambrian and Ordovician time, then regression in

Permo-Triassic time, and then the transgression of Cretaceous time. The late-Precambrian regression coincides with Pangaea Minus One. As it split apart, with spreading centers forming all over the place, the Cambro-Ordovician transgression occurred, and when the smaller continents came back together there was the Permo-Triassic regression, and when they split apart again came the famous Cretaceous transgression, when Colorado was underwater."

Hugh Davies, of the Papuan Geologic Survey, published cross-sections

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of New Guinea that showed a huge ophiolite dipping northward. The Australian Plate, like a shovel, had lifted this piece of Pacific mantle and crust. The ophioliteologists Robert Stevens, John Malpas, and Harold Williams, of Memorial University of Newfoundland, described a series of ophiolites in Newfoundland as remnants of an arc that collided with North America in Ordovician time, signing in the Taconic Orogeny. Eli Silver, of the University of California, Santa Cruz, working in Indonesia, traced a large ophiolite there from its emplaced position on a submerged microcontinent northward into an ocean basin.

As comparable research went on around the world, a question that attended all of it was "What ancient geography can be deduced from ophiolites?" and spectacular deductions continued to be forthcoming. The ophiolite suite seemed not only to spell out in detail the process of formation of oceanic lithosphere but to record plate collisions of which all other evidence was long since gone. Vanished oceans were recalled, and vanished plates inferred, as continents were deconstructed and continents were reconstructed. An ocean (or oceans) that once existed where the Atlantic is now had closed from north to south in Cambro-Devonian time, and the Permian disappearance of the ocean where the Urals are now had completed Pangaea. The Pacific Plate, now the largest in the world, did not exist then, but a spreading ridge, propagating westward, split Pangaea into Laurasia and Gondwanaland in late Triassic and early Jurassic time, and opened the Tethys Ocean. The early central Atlantic was a part of Tethys. As oceans came and went and continents evolved, island arc after island arc had been swept into larger masses—a story that could suggest that the first dry lands of Genesis were arcs accreting in a globe-girdling sea.

As with so many things that were obscure or mystifying before the arrival of plate tectonics, the discovery of the origin of ophiolites was something like the discovery that the rock you have been using for twenty-five years as a doorstep is actually the Stone of Scone. Suddenly, for example, the concept unmentionable in a Stanford doctoral thesis was helping to tell the story of California as it had not been understood before. Moores, reflecting

on this, said to me once, "If the story of California sounds fantastic, with all its accreting arcs and mélanges coming from the western sea, just look at a map of the southwest Pacific—look at the relationship between Australia and Indonesia right now."



As fresh attention accrued to the ophiolitic suite where—in completeness—it was found on land, the actual dimensions of the ocean lithosphere could be measured part by part from top to bottom, clarifying the results of seismic refraction. After the sequence has formed at spreading centers—where it is in large part liquid and is much swollen with heat—it cools and thins as it moves away, and after travelling twenty million years and seven hundred miles is a deep cold slab:

A few tens of metres of ocean sediments drift down upon the deep cold slab, settling on top of

a kilometre or so of pillow lavas, under which is

a kilometre or so of sheeted dikes, under which is

a kilometre or so of plutonic rock (plagiogranite, gabbro), under which is

a kilometre or so of plutonic rock in which cumulate crystals settled in layers upon a distinct chamber bottom—

the Moho—

under which is a kilometre or so of mantle rock, some of which was melted in the spreading center and some of which is peridotite in its solid original form and if water has reached it is serpentine.

When Moores talks about ophiolites with fifth graders in Davis, he sketches the ocean floor much as he has for me, simplifying the vertical sequence and presenting an idealized rock column that closely resembles the one above. It is more than just a useful model. In its general way, it is accurate. But as

a description it is only somewhat more encompassing than to say that Herman Melville wrote a novel about a one-legged madman in vengeful pursuit of a whale. Remarkable as ocean lithosphere may be for its worldwide youth and repeated character, it is not nearly as simple as that summary outline. In Moores' words, "Where ophiolites are made, in spreading centers, hot fluids are mixing, cooling, and so forth. We are not talking about clear sedimentary layers; ophiolite contacts are gradational. Moreover, there are various types of ophiolites: some are from the basins behind or in front of island arcs, some from the intersections of spreading centers and transform faults. There is undersea 'weathering.' Parts of the sequence erode, more sediment comes down, and as a result there are hiatuses in seafloor rock, just as there are in rock that accumulates on land. In Italian ophiolites, the diabase is missing, and so is the gabbro. There is some gabbro in Elba. But there are no sheeted-dike complexes in Italy. Obviously, Italian ophiolites formed in a different ocean environment, and what that may have been is not well understood. Oceanic crust is not a simple three-layered thing, as geophysics is telling us now. Geophysicists are unable to produce a consistent model. Nature is messy."

One day, on a field trip we made to Cyprus, Moores did a long and detailed inspection of an outcrop he had not studied before, and figured out a chain of magmatic events in which layered gabbro had come first, and a plagiogranite sill had intruded below the gabbro—an inversion of the usual sequence. "This reminds us not to take the chart of the ophiolites simply," he said. "Layered gabbro may be lower than plagiogranite in the master chart, but here we see a plagiogranite sill under the layered gabbro. It came in later. Things don't always happen in the earth as they do on charts."

Not to confuse me but just to give me a reality shot, he sketched out what he described as "an expanded ophiolitic assemblage"—an elaboration of the picture I had written on my palm. He repeated the generalized column with enough added detail to suggest the actual complexity of the rock that lies below the oceans. I could forget it as soon as I read it, but at least I ought to sense the tangle of nature, and thus the nature of science.

Where you find ophiolites on land, you might find at the top of the sequence the shallow-water limestones of the sea from which they emerged, or even laterites from soils formed in air as the ophiolite was lifted by the continental margin.

The deep-water sediments that drifted down upon the moving lithospheric plate may be chalk (as in Cyprus) or the product of volcanoes (as in the Smartville Block) or chert (as in Italy or Greece). They tell you something about the oceanic environment through which the lithosphere travelled.

Beneath the massive pillow lavas are more pillow lavas, shot through with diabase dikes that came up in molten state with enough pressure to continue past the

zone of massive sheeted dikes. If the ophiolite were an animal, these originally vertical laminations would be its brain. Taken together, they are the tape measure and chronometer of the seafloor. As each new dike forced its way into the complex, the seafloor spread that much. New dikes would intrude every fifty to a hundred years, often splitting the previous dike up the middle. The average width of the split dikes would be about seventy centimetres. They recorded absolutely the episodic widening of the ocean lithosphere, in contrast to the arithmetical notion of geophysicists, who suggest that seafloors spread continuously at a quotient number of centimetres per year.

Among the plagiogranites are large diabase dikes (feeders of the sheeted complex)

and large diabase dikes are among the massive varitextured gabbros as well.

The stratiform gabbros are generally cyclic: plagioclase and pyroxene cumulate above olivine and pyroxene cumulate with intercumulate plagioclase (and sometimes olivine and plagioclase) above olivine cumulate with some chromite in it, a combination known as dunite. You will not at once recognize all these things where an ophiolite has made an appearance in a roadcut or a mountain cliff, but at least try to remember that somewhere within this zone is the geophysical Moho—

and at the bottom of this zone is the petrologic Moho.

I have to interrupt him. Two Mohos? How could there be two Mohos? The Moho, as fifth graders can tell you, is where the crust ends and the mantle begins—about five kilometres down from the ocean bottom and thirty-five kilometres below most places on continents and as much as sixty kilometres below deeply floating mountains. "Moho" is a geophysical term, coined in honor of the Croatian seismologist Andrija Mohorovičić, who in 1909 discovered the crust-mantle boundary. When geophysicists examine their

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autodriven strip-chart recordings, which look like closeup photographs of matted gray hair, they see what Mohorivčić saw. They see seismic waves speeding up when they hit the olivine-rich cumulates, and they call that the change from crust to mantle. Geologists looking at ophiolites in geographical settings see mantle material below the olivine-rich cumulates and discern that the mantle supplied the olivine that went into the rock above it and now devilishly accelerates the geophysicists' seismic waves. Below the olivine-rich cumulates geologists see what they regard as the true transition from crust to mantle, and they call it the petrologic Moho. Geophysicists insist their machines can't be wrong, the nature of the rock notwithstanding. Moores says to remember, however, that Moho means "Mohorivčić discontinuity" and the seismic discontinuity is decidedly where geophysicists say it is. The discontinuity is seismic and is recorded on paper, but the crust-mantle boundary, which is lower, is recorded in the rock. Nature, in this case, is not messy or confused. The science is—for the time being. Like the early cartographers piecing together the face of the globe, geologists and geophysicists are now trying to map places that no human being will ever see but which are features of the earth no less than Scotts Bluff or the Shetland Islands, and were features of the earth when Scotts Bluff and the Shetland Islands were other rock in other places, and will be features of the earth when Scotts Bluff has totally disintegrated and the Shetland Islands are under the sea. The two Mohos are like a camera's divided range finder trying to close. The two Mohos are an imperfectly mapped frontier

under which, in the ophiolitic sequence, the kilometre or so of mantle rock is peridotite, a general term for rock composed mainly of olivine and a little pyroxene. Depending on the kind of pyroxene and the amount of pyroxene that is in it, peridotite is also called harzburgite and lherzolite and dunite, and, if water has reached it, serpentine. Peridotite that has moved in its solid original form is called tectonite, and presumably extends to the bottom of the lithospheric plate. One of the thickest measurable sections of mantle rock emplaced on any continent today is in Macedonia, and is about seven kilometres from top to bottom, a considerable weight to lift from the mantle into the air.

In this young field within earth science, the two Mohos are scarcely

the sole battleground. Because ophiolites develop not only at mid-ocean ridges but also in the small spreading centers associated with island arcs and sometimes along oceanic transform faults, arguments about their origins can be intense. There is considerable agreement that the Smartville ophiolites relate to the arrival of an exotic island arc, and that the Bay of Islands ophiolite complex, in Newfoundland, formed at a mid-ocean spreading center. But Moores thinks Cyprus formed in mid-ocean, and most ophiolitologists do not. Italy's ophiolites, with their missing parts, seem to some, but not others, to be fragments of oceanic transform faults. The Papuan ophiolites of New Guinea are so complicated that they seem—to some workers—to have come not only from a mid-ocean spreading center but also from behind an island arc.

Moores says that ophiolites are more important as models for the mechanism of spreading than they are as relics of the environments where they were made. The elapsed time between formation and emplacement is measurable by various methods, and some people argue that emplacement seems to have happened too quickly—an average of thirty million years—for most of the world's ophiolites to have derived from mid-ocean centers. Moores says he has no argument with people who hold that most ophiolites form near continents—in fore-arcs or back-arcs—but he insists that there is enough time to bring them in from mid-ocean ridges as well. Geologists argue about the chambers of magma under spreading centers, and whether the chambers were continuous over time or were punctuated units that crystallized and were followed by new chambers that in turn crystallized, and so forth. They wonder, above all, why only a few ophiolites are more than a thousand million years old, while the earth itself is four and a half times older. For the last thousand million years they can work out the tectonic history—the shifting shapes of continents, the rise of long-gone mountains—from the ophiolites that were left behind. Before that, in the early Proterozoic and the Archean Eons, what was going on? Was something different going on? Something other than plate tectonics?

The long argument over how ophiolites are emplaced has provided workers with a more immediate distraction. In 1971, R. G. Coleman, of the United

States Geological Survey, proposed that where ocean crust slides into a trench and goes under a continent, a part of the crust—i.e. an ophiolite—is shaved off the top and ends up on the lip of the continent. He called this “obduction.” In 1976, David Elliott, of Johns Hopkins, decided that rocks could not stand the roughshod tectonics that Coleman had proposed—that the ophiolites would be shattered into countless parts and would just not make it up there. Elliott proposed gravity sliding—ophiolites as toboggans coming to rest. But something would have to lift the sea-floor and break some off before it could slide. And what, for example, could have lifted the Macedonian mantle more than forty-five thousand vertical feet? The idea that enjoys the widest acceptance at the moment was around before either of the others, but no one much noticed, because it came from a graduate student and a postdoctoral fellow. In 1969, Peter Temple and Jay Zimmerman had proposed that the emplacement of an ophiolite might occur when a continental margin goes down under ocean crust, jams a trench, and then isostatically lifts the ocean crust.

Their proposal, derived from seismic data, recognized that the subduction of lithospheric plates was far more varied than people had supposed. Not only did ocean floor dive under continents but also—and much more commonly—it dived under other ocean floor, like two carpets overlapping. The lower slab, after melting, rose through the upper one as a volcanic-island arc. Now the island arc begins to move with the plate on which it rests. Plate motions shift. New trenches form. In back-arc basins, new ocean crust is made. Some island arcs go in one direction for a while and then reverse themselves. They choke a trench, say, and then go the other way, eating up their own crust as they go. Some of the crust might get emplaced as an ophiolite. The Marianas back-arc basin is spreading now, and so is the Lau-Havre Basin behind the Tonga-Kermadec arc, and so is the basin behind the South Sandwich Islands. Between Indonesia and the Philippines are two trenches that are eating their way toward each other and if nothing stops them will destroy each other. Some people—Moore among them—think

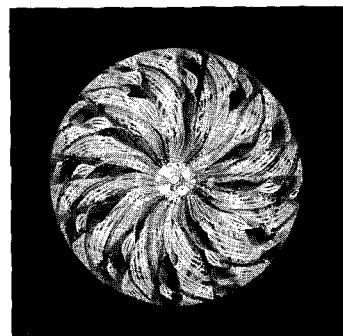
that in similar fashion off Jurassic California two trenches were active simultaneously, the easterly one dipping to the east and the westerly one dipping west, and both were destroyed during the Smartville emplacement. In *Geology* for December, 1983, the volcanologist Alex McBirney, after dealing with the increasingly complicated attempts to relate igneous rocks to plate tectonics, closed with a vision of the decade to come. He said, “I predict that our present confusion about igneous rocks will rise to undreamed-of levels of sophistication.”

Within half a decade, it was decided that the Smartville arc had formed where a spreading center developed in a transform fault or a fracture zone, after which the vector of the plate changed.

When plate motions change, transform faults may turn into subduction zones or spreading centers. Forty-three million years ago, for example, the Pacific Plate changed its heading from north to northwest. In the hot-spot track of the Emperor and Hawaiian Seamounts, the change is recorded in a pronounced bend—from north-south to northwest-southeast—dating exactly to that time. As transform faults turned into trenches all over the ancestral Pacific, the Tonga-Kermadec arc was created, and the Aleutian Islands and the Marianas. Something like this seems to have happened a hundred and seventy-five million years ago, creating the Smartville island arc.

That, Moore said, is where things are today—in the understanding of an ophiolite and its history in the world. If I was confused, so were geologists, not to mention geophysicists. “It has taken people a lot of time to stop thinking of these things as locally derived igneous rocks, and to begin thinking of them as transported tectonic features.” If the Smartville Block was bewildering in the third and fourth dimension, I should at least reflect on the complexity of the surface, where Yuba City is the county seat of Sutter County, Marysville is the county seat of Yuba County, Auburn is the county seat of Placer County, Placerville is the county seat of El Dorado County, and El Dorado is the county seat of nowhere.

Heaping Pelion upon Ossa, Moore reminded me that there was a possible



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ophiolite higher in the Sierra and that in many ways it perplexed the relative simplicity of the story he had been telling. Known in geology as the Feather River Peridotite, it was a large body of serpentine and related rocks that we had seen near the interstate just below Dutch Flat, where we went into a canyon one day whose walls, soft to the touch, were snakeskin black and green. The Feather River Peridotite defied explanation, because it was much older than the terranes on either side of it. If this region of the western United States consisted of accreted terranes, progressively younger as you moved west, what was the Feather River Peridotite doing there between Sonoma and Smartville? "The dates on it range from the Devonian through the Permian," Moores said. "We don't know how it got here. It was metamorphosed at six hundred degrees centigrade and twenty kilometres down. Must have been an extraordinary thrust that brought it up from twenty kilometres. Some of the rocks it deforms on its eastern contact are Triassic in age. It is older than Sonoma but was emplaced later. It is older than Smartville and lies east of Smartville, but—who knows how or why?—it was emplaced later. We have the story of several successive terranes neatly tying onto North America, and then we discover that the Feather River Peridotite is between No. 2 and No. 3, that it is much older than any rock in No. 2, and that its emplacement is younger than the arrival of No. 3. The Feather River Peridotite was about two hundred million years old when emplaced here. What does that mean? That it's anomalously old? That it was picked up first by an island arc and ultimately emplaced twice? Is it, in the first place, an ophiolite? What else can it be? It includes serpentine, unserpentinized peridotite, metagabbros, other amphibolites of diverse parentage, and, possibly, deformed sheeted dikes. What does that suggest?"

To Steve Edelman, a young structural geologist and tectonicist trained at Davis and the University of South Carolina, that suggested a genuine ophiolite, however baffling its history might be, and he believed he had found the sheeted dikes that would seal the discussion. He was the one geologist who had ever come out of the Sierra mentioning this possibility. One day in 1989, Edelman got off a train

in Davis (being between jobs and between grants, he could not afford to fly) and started for the mountains to enrich his field research. He asked Moores to go with him, and I went along.

Edelman, whose beard is red, looked like a tennis player prepared to serve with a rock hammer. He was wearing a pink eyeshade in foam plastic, an aqua T-shirt, shorts, Adidas shoes, and white socks with red and blue bands. We went down a very steep canyon side more than five hundred vertical feet into the narrow defile of Slate Creek, close to the mining camps of Grass Flat, French Camp, and Yankee Hill, and closer to Devil's Gate. Slate Creek was a place of spare light, where miners had removed a hundred thousand ounces of gold. In California canyons as remote as this, gold has more recently been grown in the form of plants with spiky leaves of the sort that were painted by Henri Rousseau. In a statewide effort to stop the industry, the government in Sacramento had organized something called CAMP—Campaign Against Marijuana Production. CAMP narcs were said to be posing as geologists when they roamed the wild country. A geology graduate student from the University of Texas, doing field work in the Coast Ranges, had been captured, presumably by marijuana growers, and—with one shot to the head—executed on a beach near Westport. The executioners have never been caught. A man in the California Division of Mines and Geology whose work frequently takes him into the Sierra foothills goes into every bar in every old mining camp and forest hamlet within a radius of five or ten miles and tells everyone present what he is doing and where. Out in the crops and outcrops, when he encounters people they know about him.

To the nineteenth-century miners a lot of rock was slate. Slate Creek was

flowing over a beautiful gray diabase. I remarked that it was one of the clearest streams I had seen anywhere south of the Brooks Range. Moores marvelled, too, saying that he could see "shear-sense indication in porphyroclasts at the bottom of the creek—it's that clear."

This seemed to please Edelman, but not greatly. He had asked Moores to come to Slate Creek to see if he could agree that the diabase, as old and recrystallized and murkily deformed as it was, showed any pentimento of the laminations and chilled margins of sheeted ophiolitic dikes.

Seeing nothing in his lens that impressed him as he moved from ledge to ledge upstream, Moores struggled to be coöperative. He said, "It's not a good stretch. We have to get around the next bend. . . . I think I see some folding, some layering. Maybe it's gabbroic."

Edelman seemed to speed up a bit. "Maybe that is a pillow there," Moores said, hopefully. But doubt was the pillowcase.

Now Edelman was on the run. He promised better things ahead. We had not yet reached the exposures he wanted us to see. Around the next bend, he closely scrutinized a big outcrop that jutted into the stream. He said that in his judgment it was a set of sheeted dikes. What did Moores think?

Moores leaned in to the rock, lingered, drew back, and said, "It's O.K. if you're a believer. It's not a skeptic's outcrop."

"And this one?"

"Only slightly more convincing than the last."

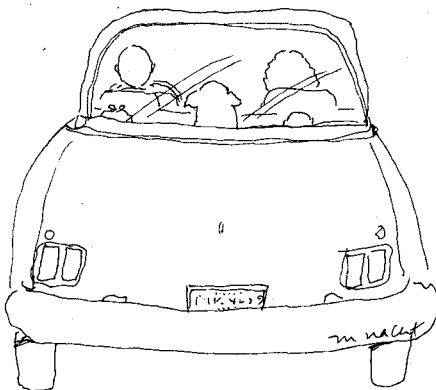
Edelman was right, though. The farther we moved upstream, the more the gray rock seemed to exhibit the features he had asked Moores to witness. But the weathering and deformation were such that the laminations were not easy to discern. Moores, with his leather cases and leather pouches lined up on his belt, his wide-brimmed fedora shading his beard, appeared to have been there since 1849.

"I don't think a Howard Day type skeptic is going to believe this," he said, mentioning a metamorphic petrologist at Davis.

"No," Edelman said. "I guess not."

Moores said, "Fortunately, there's only one of those in the world."

Edelman said, "I know it gets good up here ahead of us. Suspend your



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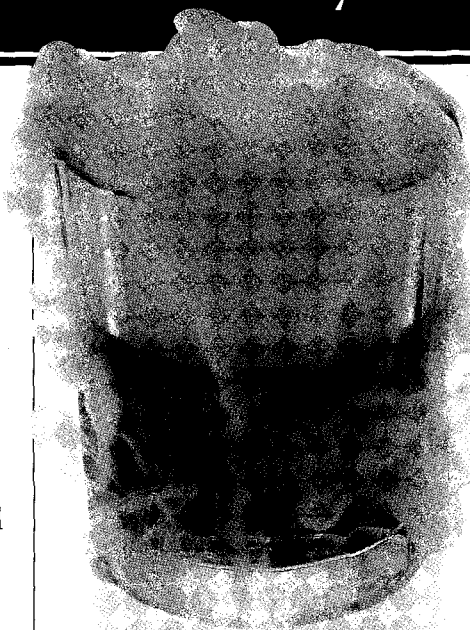
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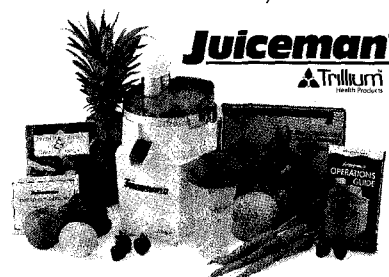
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judgment until you see the good stuff—until you see the well-defined sheeted dikes."

A little farther on, Moores paused at an outcrop for a long close look, with and without a lens. Minutes went by. Slate Creek went by, making the only sound. At last, Moores said, "That's a good one. That would convince Howard Day."

The next ledge was even better. Moores examined it for some time. Edelman's expression was full of sniffed victory. Moores said, "I have no doubt that that is a chilled margin. And that. And that." Looking into Edelman's eyes, he added, "But I'm a believer."

Another few yards, another rock face, and Moores said, "If you were an ophiolite and someone took you down to six hundred degrees and twenty kilometres, maybe this is what you would look like. If this is not a dike complex, what else could it have been? Nothing, is my answer."

Edelman said, "So. Do you believe in the Devil's Gate Ophiolite?"

Moores said, "I believe in the Devil's Gate Sheeted Dike Complex."

Edelman: "You happy?"

Moores: "Yes."

Edelman: "Another ophiolite in the Sierra."

A lot of geology is learned now from

seismic waves and satellites, and pieced together on printout paper in artificial light. Neither a seismometer nor a satellite was ever going to see what Edelman had seen.

Moores said, "If you took Japan and its old ocean crust and collided it with the state of Washington, and the old crust was shoved over Washington, you might have something like the Feather River Peridotite. If this is an ophiolite, it is bigger than the Troodos of Cyprus. It does not appear to be a part of Sonomia. It could be a subsidiary of Smartville. You just don't know what it's doing here. You just know it's big and it's important."

If the Feather River Peridotite inconveniences the exotic-terrane story, it is well that it should, he said. The old picture of the western margin of North America is gone, but not long gone. The present description of assembling terranes is so new—and calls for so much working out—that it hardly requires acid-free paper. Did a large pre-assembled terrane—the Stikine Superterrane, of which Smartville would be a part—dock in the Jurassic? Or did the United Plates of America, as they have been called, arrive separately? "Most of the ophiolites from the Brooks Range on down through central British Columbia into the western United

States and in Baja California and Costa Rica are Mesozoic in age," Moores said. "They appear to represent some sort of island-arc complex that collided with western North America in mid-Jurassic time. Singly or collectively? That's hard to say. You can make it the one or the other. We can't work that out now. The timing seems to be different. It seems to be lower Cretaceous in the Brooks Range, mid-Jurassic in British Columbia, mid-Jurassic in the Sierra Nevada, and somewhat younger as one goes farther south. That could be a single, ragged-edged collision. Or it could be several terranes coming in. We're not prepared to say."

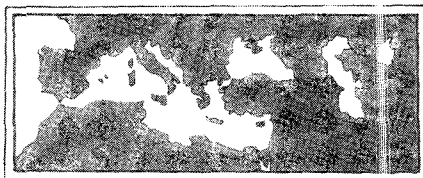
There are geologists who are not prepared to say that exotic terranes exist in such prodigious quantity. Homicidal in their sarcasm, they like to assert that their less conservative colleagues are prone to name new terranes for any change of

lithology, at any formation boundary—in fact, at any place, however small, where it is easier to claim that something is exotic than to figure out the relationships of present and missing parts. In the geology of such people, it is said, a microterrane is a field area. A nanoterrane is an outcrop. A picoterrane is a hand specimen. A femtoterrane is a thin section.

ALTHOUGH the outer shell of two-thirds of the earth is rock of the ocean crust, it is so inaccessible to the field geologist that to study even the fragments that have broken off on continental margins requires prodigious travel. Moores has pursued his specialty from Oman to Yap to Tierra del Fuego to Pakistan, and routinely has returned to the eastern Mediterranean—most of all to Cyprus. One autumn in the nineteen-eighties, when I was working in Switzerland, I flew to Cyprus to watch him do his geology there.

He met me at Larnaca, we drove north, and within the hour were tectonically deconstructing a huge broiled fish and drinking dark Cypriot wine. Politically, Cyprus was in Asia, Moores said, but geologically it belonged to no continent. It rested on the lip of Africa but was not African. It was not Eurasian. In the lowercase and literal

sense, it was mediterranean. Long after the last supercontinent began rifting and its new internal shorelines bordered the Tethys Ocean, what was to become the foundation rock of Cyprus welled up as magma in a Tethyan spreading center. At that time, about ninety million years before the present, the Eurasian and the African sides of Tethys were twice as far apart as they are now. They continued to separate for another ten million years, and then plate motions changed. As the North Atlantic began to open, Africa began to move northeast, closing with Eurasia, as it continues to do. Ongoing results include the Alps, the Carpathians, the Caucasus, the Zagros—in Moores' words, "a big slug of deformation that's throwing up mountains everywhere." By late Miocene time, geologically near the present, not much remained of Tethys in that part of the world except the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea, and the southern Caspian Sea.



It was in the late Miocene that Africa levered the Tethyan floor, and broke off Cyprus. The ophiolite was thickly covered with chalk, which had settled upon the pillow lavas as a clean lime ooze, unadulterated with sediment from any landmass—as clear an indication as you could ever hope to find that Cyprus was a piece of remote deep ocean.

For seeing and touching ocean crust—for leaning against it with a hand lens, for removing small cores to study their remanent magnetism, for mapping the varying rocks from zone to zone—there was no example in the world as well preserved as Cyprus. Shaped like a razor clam, the island had a long foot that reached up in the general direction of Turkey, which was fifty miles away. This northeastern extremity was a long low range of mountains, whose geologic history was not well understood: it seemed to be in some sense accretionary, perhaps a collection of island fragments from a confused Eurasian sea, and thus to belong—in a tectonic sense—to Turkey, which seized it by force in 1974, and established it as the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus. The Turk-

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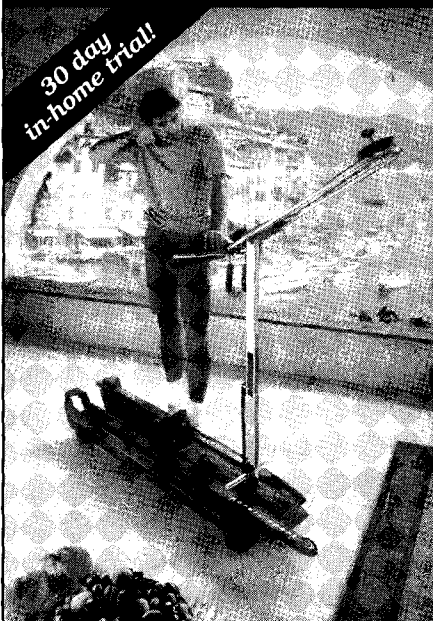


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ish Federated State of Cyprus had so far been recognized only by geologists. The thick body of the island, which rose higher than the White Mountains of New Hampshire, was the ophiolite—the exposed and integral lithospheric crust that was without continental affiliation and was the heart and substance of the independent Republic of Cyprus.

Each day, we drove out of Nicosia down the great treeless plain of the Mesaoria, on our way to the high Troodos. Trending east-west, the plain divided the island's most prominent lithologies. Off to our right about ten miles was the low silhouette of the north-coastal range, and ahead to the left were the Troodos. Through the Mesaoria ran a boundary drawn by the United Nations which was known among Greek Cypriots as the Green Line. Turks called it the Attila Line. Along it, over the plain, ran United Nations sentry boxes, like populated fence posts, farther than the eye could see. All north-south roads, even unpaved ruts, were barricaded and marked with warnings and instructive signs: "HALT!"

The feel of day in the Mesaoria was like crouching too close to a campfire. Up in the Troodos were groves of shade. Under Aleppo pines, the air was as cool as deep water, and about as still. There were whole ridgelines of sheeted diabase, weathered out in silver blades—like thousands of playing cards in one standing deck—recording in subcenturies the spreading of ten million years. There were cliffs of chalk, and bulging extrusions of pillow basalt. There were layered cumulates in massive black gabbro. There were serpentine peaks. The highest peak was Mt. Olympus. In the Hellenic world

are enough Mt. Olympuses to suggest tract housing for redundant gods. It is a godly talent that geologists have: not only to see ocean lithosphere in mountain crests but to feel comfortable in the knowledge that some of the lowest rock in the ophiolitic sequence is the highest rock of a place like Cyprus—with nothing overturned. A sawyer would also understand this—and almost anyone who could look at woodwork and see the original trees. The Cyprus ophiolite—great slab of the ocean—was bent upon the slope of

Africa. It was draped, hung, arched, folded—not quite like Dali's watches, but the image would do. Water entering peridotite to make serpentine had swelled the whole affair, and then erosion had taken over, finding the serpentine within the crown of the arch and variously stripping the other stuff off the top and down the sides until the serpentine stood highest and the ophiolitic sequence (reading upward) went down the mountains in successive steps, ending in peripheral cliffs of chalk. In some of the higher country, Moores chipped away at interbanded cumulates (so-called magmatic sediments) from the deepest pools of gabbro, and among them found a trace current, which he described as "a stream channel in the magma chamber." Rapping it with his hammer, he said, "Shows you which way is up."

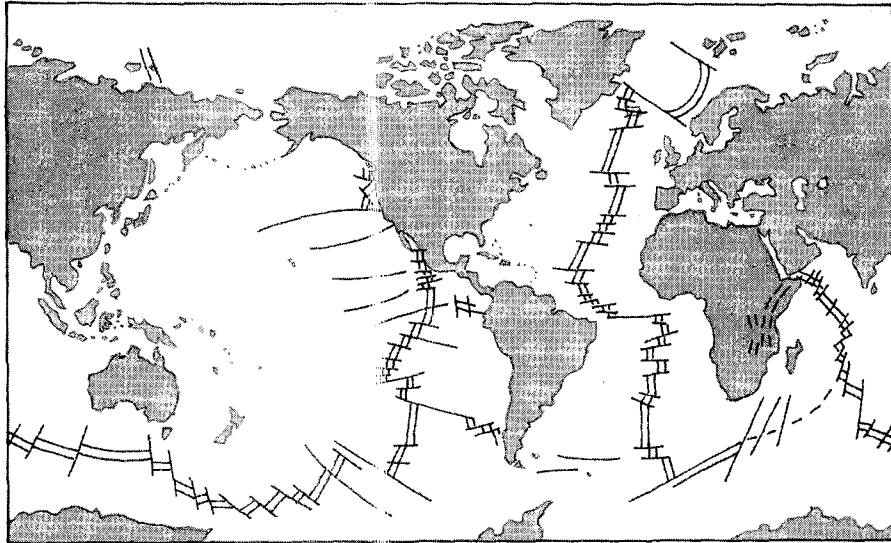
Among stone cabins whose metal roofs were weighted with stone, we hammered stone. We moved among ripening apples, Lombardy poplars, and red-roofed white villages spread on the dry mountains. We went into deep canyons. A good deal less of the massif was under forest than under grapes. From the high ridges with comprehensive views, the mountains looked like coalesced football stadiums, vineyards terraced into the sky. Above Palekhori, we picked and ate fourteen grapes, doubling the annual number destined for fresh consumption. At a table under a tree in Palekhori, we



drank coffee that was good enough to eat. It was brewed in a briki scarcely larger than a gill. It came with a glass of cool water. "Palekhori" means old village. It is in the sheeted diabase, whose stately laminations are so distinct that you can all but see their

lateral motion. Moores and Vine had found their best evidence of seafloor spreading at these altitudes. More recently, Moores had been studying fault blocks in the Troodos. In various tiltings of the sheeted diabase, he had seen that the rift valleys of ocean spreading centers tend to break into blocks as they widen—a version, on a small scale, of the faulting characteristic of the Connecticut Valley, for example, or the Newark Basin, or the Culpeper Basin, or the great western province of the Basin and Range.

The mid-ocean ridges run around the world very much like the stitching on a baseball, not in simple lines but in oscillating offset segments.



Such a pattern evidently accommodates a sphere. In any case, it is what the earth looks like where it is pulling itself apart. The ocean ridges of the world jump from rift valley to transform fault to rift valley to transform fault, everywhere they go. The rift valleys are typically about forty miles long, and are offset, also about forty miles, by the transform faults. Moores had found this pattern in the high Troodos. In rock beside a road, he pointed out sandstone sediments that fell into a bathymetric depression where a transform fault intersected a spreading center. A goatherd walked by—blue shirt, soft olive hat, a stick bag on his back. “Yasas!” he said, in greeting, above a din of goats. Nothing in his face suggested that he found it at all strange to come upon two men with the beards of Greek Orthodox priests squinting into coarse rock with the lenses of jewellers.

In a remote mountain valley, we walked into a box canyon and saw feeder dikes five metres wide that had driven upward through pillow lavas to break into the ocean and form more pillow lavas. Moores and Vine were working there in 1968 when a Cypriot dressed in a business suit materialized before them. He said that he was just out for a drive and had seen their vehicle, and he asked what they were doing. He also said that he was the Minister of the Interior. They told him that they were drilling into the rock to remove small cylindrical cores for paleomagnetic data, and in the

course of conversation they also told him that their work was in part supported by the National Science Foundation, in Washington, D.C. The

minister said, amiably, “Do you mean to tell me that your government pays you to come over here and drill holes in my island?” He stayed long enough to learn that his island was the keystone of the sea. A year and a half later, he was assassinated.

In the way that the Smartville arc seems to have brought gold to California, Cyprus brought copper to the world. “Cyprus” means copper. Whether the island is named for the metal or the metal for the island is an etymology lost in time. The mining geologist George Constantinou, director of the Cyprus Geological Survey, took us south from Nicosia one morning into the hill country near a village called Sha. On soil eroded from pillow basalt, he led the way into a grove of pines that surrounded a pit forty feet deep. Like countless old mines, it was partly filled with water. He said that the pit had been there four thousand years. Constantinou was a handsome man of alternately bright and brooding aspect, with light wavy hair, strong features, and such commanding stage presence that I imagined him as an actor. I imagined him as Prince Hamlet, King Henry V, and Archie Rice, because his physical resemblance to Laurence Olivier was so close it was unnerving. Of this small excavation framed by Aleppo pines he spoke with resonance as well as reverence. Cypriots thirty-five centuries before Christ had walked into this pine grove, and others like it, and had found native metallic copper lying on the surface, he said. Pine

resins in the groundwater had mixed with copper sulphate and reduced the copper to metal.

When Cyprus was spreading in the Tethyan floor, seawater descended through fissures and—close to or within the magma—picked up quantities of dissolved copper, and lesser amounts of mercury, manganese, tin, silver, and gold. Like the black smokers active now in the Red Sea and the Gulf of California, hot brine plumes rose through the Cypriot rock and precipitated metals and metallic compounds on the pillow lavas. From everywhere in the ancient world, people turned to Cyprus for weapons-grade copper. The swords, spears, and shields of innumerable armies were made from Cypriot copper. Before long, though, the resin-reduced metals were gone. More than a millennium passed before the Cypriots learned that dark earths where the metals had been were not a whole lot less cuprous than the metal itself. Rainwater—rare in Cyprus on the human scale but continual in geologic time—had removed lighter materials and had concentrated the copper minerals malachite and azurite in an upper zone of extreme high assay. Geologists of the twentieth century would describe such a concentration as a supergene enrichment. The ancients somehow discovered that if they mixed the cuprous earth with umber, and then heated the mixture, molten copper would flow. There was plenty of umber close at hand. UMBER is an oxide of manganese and iron. In spreading environments on ocean floors today, umber is piling up on the pillow lava in large dark-chocolate cones beside the black smokers, as it did on the pillows of the nascent Cyprus.

In 2760 B.C., smelting began in Cyprus, Constantinou told us. And in the following centuries Cyprus became an island of seven kingdoms. Slag heaps developed in forty places. The Iliad is populated with warriors armed in bronze. Bronze is copper hardened by adding some tin, and the copper would have come from Cyprus. (Copper was mined on Cyprus for nearly two thousand years before the lifetime of Homer.) In 490 B.C., Darius the Persian attacked Greece with forty thousand soldiers who carried bronze shields and bronze javelins. The Phoenicians also mined copper on Cyprus, the Romans as well. The ancients stripped the supergene, and other rich

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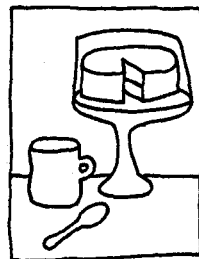
ores, down to the water table, where they had to stop. The Republic of Cyprus once used ancient slag for roads, but the old slag heaps are now protected as monuments.

After the mine at Sha, we drove on ancient slag through roadcuts of pillow basalt, west-northwest. There were orchards of carobs, figs, and pistachios, and an understory of prickly pears. This was not Lawrence Durrell's north-coastal range of "silk, almonds, apricots, oranges, pomegranates, quince."

It was an interior country of buff eucalyptus, of thousand-year-old olive trees fluted at the base. Nearly every farmhouse was white, and most had sky-blue shutters—the colors not of Cyprus but of Greece. On virtually all rooftops were boxy solar water heaters, like raised sarcophagi.

With few exceptions, they carried advertising.

On the Mesaoria, we passed new, isolated towns—one-story clusters of temporary housing, marginally superior to internment camps, built to shelter Greek Cypriot refugees from communities north of the Attila Line. We left the highway and went into the new and extremely narrow streets of Peristerona, which seemed less a town than a military barracks. Many of its people were natives of Katokopia, scarcely three miles away, but Katokopia was lost to them, beyond the Turkish line. Among these was Anastasia Constantinou, the mother of the director of the Geological Survey. She was elderly, tall, dressed in black, obviously pleased to see her son no matter what he might bring with him. The hour was near noon, the air somewhat humid and above a hundred degrees. There was a small greenhouse full of gardenias, camellias, and azaleas. The geologist went among them with a mist propagator. He opened folding chairs on a concrete terrace with a view across the treeless plain to the marble mountains of Kyrenia—the dark wall of the forbidden north. His mother set on a table bowls of boiled rice flour that had lightly thickened as it cooled. Sprinkled with sugar, it was very cold, standing in rose water. In that volcanic heat, it had four times the effect of a cold fruit soup, twice the effect of gazpacho. If you closed your eyes, you saw pools among gardens descending into pools.



heidi

At Skouriotissa, southwest of Peristerona, the concurrence of geologic time and human time had been long enough to approach a record. A very large working strip mine there had been in operation for four thousand three hundred years. The slag, piled in pyramids, represented all that time. Constantinou said that there were at least two million tons of ancient slag in and around Skouriotissa. "Skouria" means slag. The massive copper-bearing sulphide ores of Cyprus have a very characteristic sugary structure, he said, resulting in an incompetent rock that was always easy to mine. "The ancients were excellent geologists. They knew the geology of the ore bodies of Cyprus. I am an exploration geologist with a Ph.D. I don't think we will find any ore body the ancients did not know about."

The earliest known smelting of copper was in China. Did the Cypriots figure it out for themselves or learn how to do it from others? In ancient manuscripts, Constantinou said, there is no insight that helps to answer that question. *Where you find copper, you will find iron.* The umber of Cyprus is more than half iron. "It seems logical to expect that Cypriot umber was the world's first iron source, that iron was invented on Cyprus. The ancients used gabbro to grind the ore. They lined their furnaces with serpentine."

They fired their furnaces with Aleppo pines, and other conifers—the ancient forests of Cyprus. To smelt one pound of copper from sulphide required three hundred pounds of charcoal. From the earliest beginnings of the mining until the last years of the Roman Empire, about two hundred thousand tons of copper were smelted on Cyprus. That used up fifty-eight thousand square miles of pinewood forest, on an island whose total area is thirty-six hundred square miles. The forest had to be rejuvenated sixteen times for copper alone, not to mention the fleets of ships that were made on Cyprus, or the firing of the island's world-renowned kilns.

"For lack of wood, Oman, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel all had short-lived mines," Constantinou said. "The Troodos gave water here to support trees. But sixty million tons of charcoal made from 1.2 billion cubic

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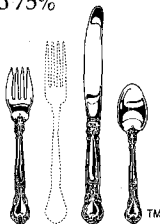
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BEFORE Moores went back to California and I to Switzerland, I accompanied him on a brief reconnaissance in Macedonia. While Cyprus was surely, as he had described it, one of the best-developed ophiolite complexes in the world, the sequence there did not include a large percentage of mantle rock. In a typical slice of ocean lithosphere, the mantle rock is nearly twenty per cent, bottoming at the aesthenosphere, the lubricious zone in the mantle which allows plates to glide. In Cyprus, the serpentinized mantle rock of the Troodos was a relatively small part of the peridotite that had once been included in the package. The rest was buried or lost. If you wanted to sense what was missing, you could do so in Macedonia, where seven vertical kilometres of exposed mantle constitute one of the thickest measurable sections of mantle rock emplaced on any continent. Moores said, "Presumably, it goes to the bottom of the plate."

In the disjunct cacophony of the airport in Athens—through a sea of Arabs wearing kaffiyehs and tobies and running shoes, of Ethiopians with wallets the size of magazines, of Panasonic briefcases turned up full—we found Hertz. We were soon at the foot of the Acropolis, establishing our bearings. Moores told me to notice the red shales and red cherts around the Theatre of Dionysus, on the low ground, and—over his shoulder as he rapidly climbed—to watch for the contact where the lithology changes. It would have been hard to miss. The freestanding, high-standing Acropolis is an almost pure massive limestone, sitting on the cherts and shales. Our way was blocked by a ticket booth. We paid a hundred drachmas. American college students were all over the summit. In the frugal shade of the Parthenon, Moores had the look and certainly the sound of a free-lance English-speaking guide. He mentioned Ictinus, Callicrates. American students leaned in to listen. He lauded the durable Phidias. He moved to the south side of the building, and students followed. He mentioned that limestone is soluble in water. Therefore, it includes caves. In caves within

this hill, gods were thought to reside. Grottoed limestone will impound water. If you were seeking refuge, or a place to endure a siege, you would choose a hill like this one. We were looking south over the Stoa of Eumenes to the shore of the Saronic Gulf. From runways there, 747s were rising. They seemed in no hurry to go away. They seemed to hang like barrage balloons. Moores said, "After the battle of Salamis, ships beached themselves by the airport. As caves in limestone enlarge, their roofs eventually collapse."

He mentioned the Parthenon's historical stratigraphy—temple, church, mosque—and the erosional forces that had brought the building to its present condition: rain, acid rain, smog, gunpowder. In 1687, the Parthenon was in use as a Turkish powder magazine. Venetians bombarded it, and the powder exploded. The event was geomorphologically catastrophic. For two thousand years the Parthenon had stood there uneroded, until that night in 1687. "There is no mortar in the Parthenon," Moores added pensively. "It is all marble, and held together by gravity. And it's gone through earthquakes, too. The geology is not well worked out here. The general story is that the Acropolis is a klippe, resting on the red cherts and shales. It is not a deep block."

A klippe is a remnant of a nappe. A nappe is a large body of rock that has been moved—by gravity, by thrust-faulting, or by any other mechanism—some distance from its place of origin. If you liked, you could call Cyprus a special kind of nappe. Moores gestured to the east, across the white city and its numerous hills, to the serrated profile of the Hymettus Range, less than ten miles away. "It is thought that the Acropolis came from there," he said. "There are problems with the idea, but it is distinctly possible."

In the heat and pressure of a collision or some other tectonic event, limestone softens, recrystallizes, and hardens as marble. The Hymettus Range is for the most part marble. Its limestone first collected on the floor of Tethys, and was later folded in collisional mountains compressed by Africa moving northeast. Marble quarries in the range had been there for something like three thousand years. The Parthenon came out of a quarry at the foot of Mt. Hymettus.

If the Acropolis is a klippe, the Acropolis itself came away from the Hymettus Range, in Eocene time, and travelled overland to Athens. About fifty million years later, in late Holocene time, the Parthenon followed, in carts.

"An alternative possibility," Moores said, "is that the Acropolis is a large block in a mélange with a matrix of red cherts and shales—an accretionary wedge tectonically scraped from Tethys when the seafloor was subducting in the Mesozoic."

The American students were looking at one another, and Moores was becoming self-conscious. A guide he may have been, but the language he was speaking was, to the students, local. "I have always thought it sacrilegious to come here and do geology," he said. The tone was apologetic but not sincere. His next words were "I think the shales would correlate with the Olonos-Pindos deep-water sediments, which extend from the Peloponnesus through western Greece."

As one might expect in a marine country sitting on a microplate caught in the crunch between Africa and Europe, ophiolitic fragments of varying age are strewn about Greece like amphora handles. As Moores drove up the broad avenue of Vasillis Sofias and into Sintagma Square, he remarked that the silver that financed Athens came out of a metamorphosed ophiolite at Laurium, near Cape Sounion, the southern tip of Attica. He parked beside the Bank of Greece. Standing at a teller's cage on a green-and-black floor of polished serpentine, he changed dollars to drachmas.

North through Attica we moved swiftly, as if we were in a light plane flying at an altitude of three feet. A few miles west of the North Euboean Gulf, Moores pulled over and stopped at what appeared to be a long high roadcut. It was actually a limestone cliff, of the Parnassus Range, which rose steeply behind it. "There are bits and pieces of ophiolite on top of the Parnassus," Moores said. "This is Thermopylae." The broad coastal plain to the east was full of olives and cotton and was large enough to accommodate a very large army. In 480 B.C., however, the coastal plain was not there, and water lapped close to the rock. There was insufficient room for the attacking Persian Army. Leonidas, king of the Spartans, de-

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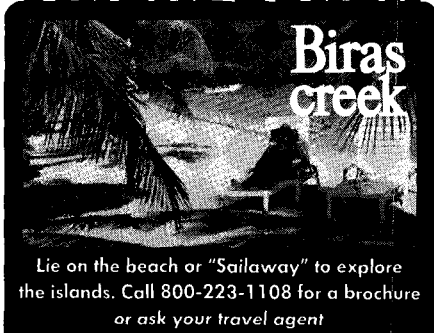
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fended the narrow margin of land with Parnassus ridges at his back. He was defeated after the Persians learned of a route around the ridges. "Hot springs were at the foot of the mountains then," Moores said. "They are long gone. The coastal plain came up recently—at some point in the past twenty-five hundred years—as a result of an earthquake."

In the nineteen-sixties, in his long and lonely field seasons in Macedonia, Moores read his way in several senses into the country. He learned to speak the language. His interests were well spread across a couple of hundred million years. He asked me if I knew John Cuthbert Lawson's "Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion," and described it as "polytheistic mysticism with a superficial patina of Christianity." Not being a geologist, I took his word for it. Farther north, he said:

This is Lamia. A few kilometres outside Lamia, during the Second World War, Greek partisans shot three German soldiers. Germans stopped the first hundred and thirty-eight people who came down the road, and killed them. The German rule was fifty Greeks for one German.

Over there to the east, fifteen miles, is Volos, where Jason and the Argonauts sailed from.

Pharsala is about twenty-five miles west of us. Near Pharsala, Caesar defeated Pompey on alluvium at the western margin of the Tsangli ophiolite. Pharsala itself is on serpentine. If you see a black church, you are probably looking at serpentine. That's particularly so in Italy. In Florence, the dark rock in the walls of the Duomo is serpentine—and the Giotto campanile and the baptistery with the Ghiberti doors. In Istanbul, the dark columns in the Hagia Sophia are serpentine.

We came into a vast horizon of land so flat it seemed unnatural. It seemed flatter than the Great Central Valley of California, if that is possible. Solitary oaks were widely spaced above cotton, wheat, barley—a tree on each twenty acres, more or less. In a manner that called up ritual, tall telephone poles stalked across the two-dimensional landscape. Woodhenge. A huge Pleistocene lake had been here. In the stillness of its depths, smooth silts collected:

This is the Plain of Thessaly. In the eighth century B.C., Greek tribes settled here, chasing off the inhabitants. The fugitives went into the hills. They were fine horsemen. They

raided the Greek settlements on horseback. The legend of the centaurs may have come from this. At night, you couldn't tell man from horse.

Do you see those switchbacks climbing out of the plain? The Greeks used to survey a road by putting a hundred kilos on the back of a burro and sending him uphill. They followed the burro with a road.

Three coastal mountains now formed the eastern skyline: Mt. Pelion, Mt. Ossa, and Mt. Olympus. In an island universe of Mt. Olympuses, there is one Mt. Olympus. This one. Sealed in its own integument, at the moment it was eighty per cent cloud. We could see only the base. Of the country more immediately around us, Moores said:

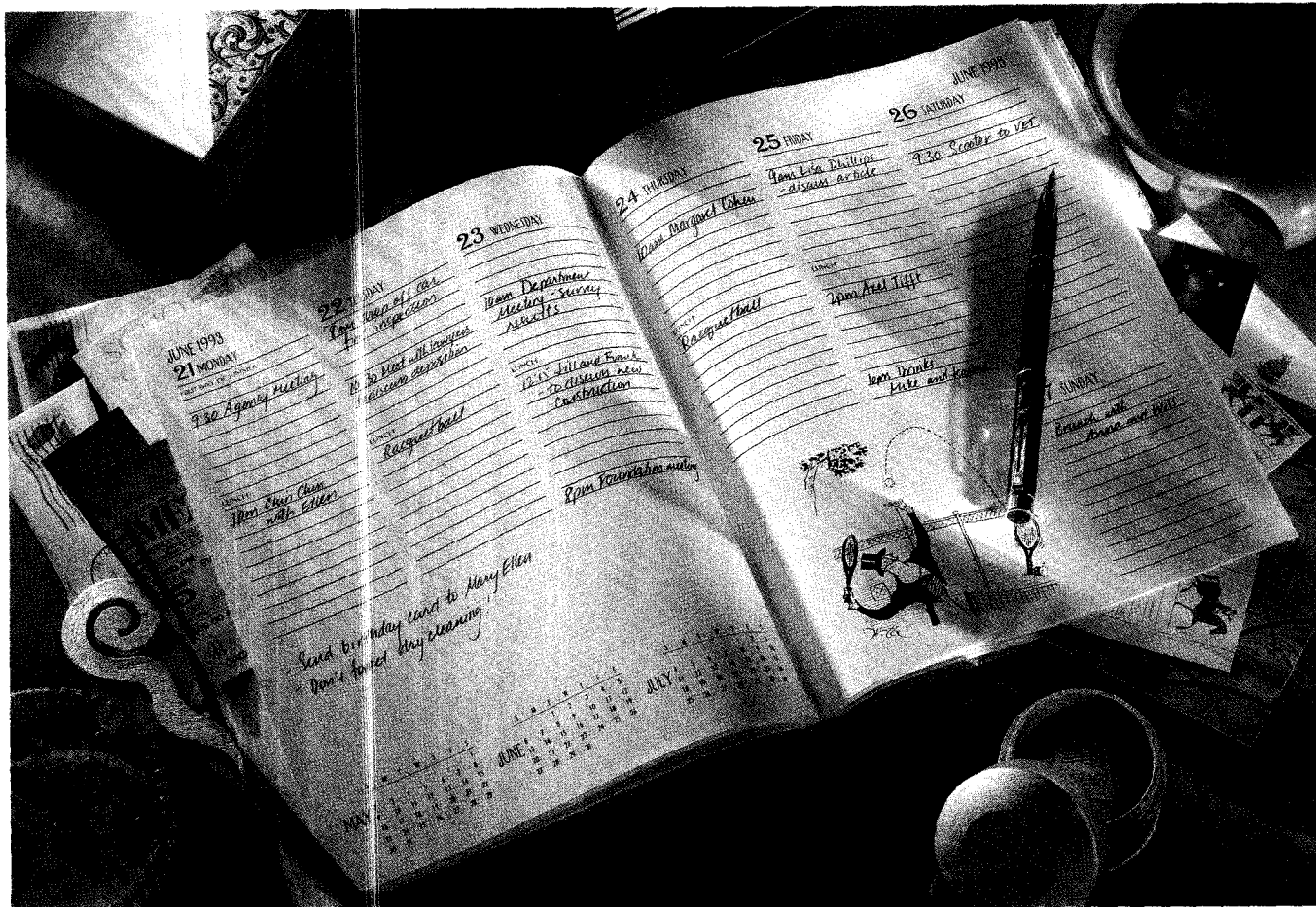
This is the Pelagonian Massif, a Mesozoic microcontinent that was thrust over a dome of younger sediment. The dome is marine rock—shallow-water limestone and flysch. From the highest part of the dome, the Pelagonian rock has worn away, and in that window stands Mt. Olympus, ten thousand six hundred feet. I think you need technical equipment to get to the summit.

This is the Vale of Tempe, where the Muses came down off Olympus and played in the waters.

We were soon in highland Macedonia, with wide views over red-and-white villages to far-distant mountains: west into the Pindus Range, north into Albania. At five thousand feet, the modest summits of Macedonia—Vourinos, Flambouron—were about as high as the Adirondacks of northern New York. The central Adirondacks could be said to be otherworldly, their lithology being rare on earth but nearly identical with most of the surface of the moon. In a different but analogous manner, Vourinos and Flambouron and the country roundabout related to surroundings far removed from the face of the earth. Somehow they had been lifted forty-five thousand vertical feet, and were almost pure mantle.

The Vourinos Complex—this mantle peridotite included—was Tethyan sea-floor that formed in a spreading center in Jurassic time. It was emplaced on the Pelagonian microcontinent in lower Cretaceous time, and later broken into four major fault blocks. The narrative was straightforward and fairly simple, but of course it had not been helpful to Moores as he began work here in 1963, because plate tectonics and em-

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placed ophiolites were uncoined terms and the narrative did not exist. He was further inconvenienced by the ravages and deceptions of erosion, which had caused the lowest rock in the sequence to stand highest in the country. Moreover, the sheeted dikes of Vourinos diabase were misleadingly parallel to the sedimentary beds that had formed above them. After years of living with this terrane and taking it apart in his mind, Moores had come to realize that soon after the dikes formed at a spreading center they had been rotated ninety degrees from their original plane. In recent time, the four fault blocks had tilted over as well, and were like broken segments of a fallen ancient column. On paper, Moores had brought them into spatial coherence. He had worked here intensively for three years, and continually after that. He had recognized the contrast between the mantle rock and the magmatic rocks above it, and had become convinced that these parts taken together were in turn parts of a larger sequence.

Now, on the road to Skoumtsa, in the valley of a small clear stream, he was standing on the contact between the ophiolite and the Pelagonian rock on which it had been emplaced. Pelagonian limestone was overlain by serpentine that had been sheared up badly and turned into a messy schist as it skidded to a tectonic stop. The mantle peridotite had been serpentized there where it scraped upon the continent, but as we moved away from that boundary the peridotite became purer to the point of zero serpentization. The rock had never been magma. We were seeing (he presumed) the earth's mantle in an essentially unaltered state.

Since the ophiolitic column was lying on its side, we could advance overland on the face of the earth and lithologically descend deeper and deeper into the mantle. We did this on a very rocky and narrow road, some of which had been cut by engineering. After crossing the stream, we paused to look at a dynamited outcrop—a rough texture, dark green, knobby with pyroxene in a smooth matrix of olivine. "This is solid mantle," he said. "It's just about as fresh as you'll ever find, with the exception of mantle material in a diamond pipe. We are roughly five kilometres below the petrologic Moho, and that would have been about

NET

We were sitting along the river as the daylight
faded in high summer too slowly to be followed
a pink haze gathering beyond the tall poplars
over on the island and late swallows snapping gnats
from the glassy reaches above the shallows
where feathers of a gray mist were appearing
trout leaped like the slapping of hands behind the low voices
that went on talking of money with the sound of rapids
running through them the boots smelled of former water
the piled nets smelled of the deaths of fish I will know now
how night comes with eyes of its own to a river
and then it was dark and we were seeing by river light
as the oldest got up first taking a coil of rope
down and disappeared into the sound then we
went after him one by one stepping into the cold pull
of the current to feel the round stones slip farther
below us and we uncoiled the nets with the voices
scarcely reaching us over the starlit surface
until we stood each alone hearing only the river
and held the net while the unseen fish brushed past us

—W. S. MERWIN

ten kilometres below the Tethyan ocean bottom, and fifteen kilometres below Tethyan sea level. Some people like to think that this rock slid by gravity into its position on the Pelagonian continental platform. From fifteen kilometres below sea level? How do you do *that* with a gravity slide?"

Now and again in that country we saw, in the peridotite, bands and lenses of dunite, which generally contains chromite, the source of chrome. The chromite looked like small, spattered blobs of tar, not like the grille of a Jaguar. The village of Khromion was ten kilometres away. During the Second World War, Germans used Greeks as forced labor there. Chrome was essential for the high-strength steel in the armor of tanks; and chrome, as it happened, sharpened the effect of armor-piercing shells. Peridotite with dunite in it is softened, more susceptible to erosion. "You can almost map the rock by looking at the relative roughness of the terrain," Moores said. "The smooth and grassy swales have dunite under them. The pure peridotite is in the rough ridges."

For a couple of years, Moores worked alone in Macedonia, attracting the attention of nothing much but mastiffs, which appeared out of nowhere. The mastiffs were protective of sheep, and hostile to geologists and wolves. In 1965, Moores turned up in the country with a wife (Judy had just graduated from Mount Holyoke), and later on

with the Volkswagen bus and Geneva, Brian, and Kathryn. This attracted the attention of old Macedonian women, who lived on the Vourinos Ophiolite, and would appear out of nowhere. They admired the Moores children so much that they spat on them. This was a custom that warded off the evil eye. Judy learned to snatch baby Kathryn away from crones who adored her. In the Volkswagen one day, Judy turned around and saw Brian spitting on his Teddy bear.

In Davis in 1989, when Kathryn had just turned sixteen she fell sick with acute mononucleosis, and her throat was so choked by swollen tonsils that she was completely unable to speak. The antidotal spit was recalled at the kitchen table. Kathryn wrote on a slip of paper: "Maybe it only lasts sixteen years."

IT was in Macedonia that I asked Moores how he felt about being in a profession that had identified the olivine that people would be ripping the mountainsides to take away, and he said, "Schizophrenic. I grew up in a mining family. . . . Now I am a member of the Sierra Club."

If you ask someone in Arizona where Crown King is, the usual answer is a shrug. Someone going home to Crown King would turn off the Flagstaff-Phoenix highway, raise a plume of dust on Bloody Basin Road, and go west-southwest toward mountains. The

elevation of the basin is thirty-five hundred feet. The ridgeline ahead is seven thousand feet, and while you lurch and rattle toward it—as Moores and I did recently in a rented pickup equipped absurdly with cruise control—a good deal of time goes by but the mountains seem no closer. Moores said he remembered his father whistling a Schubert serenade on Bloody Basin Road. Moores was hearing it now, as he always had when crossing this particular stretch of country, although he had not been there in twenty years. In early slanting light, fields of prickly pears flashed like silver dollars.

We went through a one-house town. On the seat between us was an Exxon map of Arizona. "That was Cordes," I said. "Why is that place called Cordes?"

Moores said, "Because that was Bill Cordes' house."

The dust behind us thickened. We were now on the old Black Canyon Highway. When Moores was teen-aged, this unpaved and bridgeless thoroughfare lined with mesquite, cat's-claw, and paloverde was the main route from Prescott to Phoenix. We passed five buzzards eating a rabbit. While distance compiled, the mountains continued their retreat. After leaving Black Canyon Highway, we threw even more dust on saguaro cactus, agave, cholla, and ocotillo. We went through Cleator, a town that somehow managed to seem smaller than Cordes. There was a gas pump dating from the twenties which seemed to have died in the thirties. Beside it—in the open air—was a radio that had last heard the Blue Network. If you squinted hard enough into the cactus, you could see Dorothea Lange changing film. After more long miles, we began to climb, and now—in direct proportion to the gradient—the route evolved from an ordinary unpaved right-of-way into one of the oddest and certainly one of the costliest dirt roads in America. Its humble surface passed through roadcuts of exceptional engineering. It went through narrow defiles past vertical walls of competent granite blasted by construction crews in the century before. A railroad had once climbed three thousand feet there, its purpose being to help dismantle the mountains themselves, to ease down from Crown King in gondolas inexhaustible ores of hard-rock gold. "This railroad was an in-

credible feat of engineering, resulting in futility," Moores said. "The ore just wasn't there. Mine promoters are a breed apart. Their mentality is 'Of course it's there.' When I was ten, I heard a promoter say, 'We have a thousand tons of ore blocked out. When we get going, we're going to process a hundred tons a day.' He didn't stop to calculate that a hundred per cent of his ore would be gone in ten days. Mine promoters will believe anything, and so will their backers. The money came from New York, principally. The promoters were always looking for people with more money than smarts."

A voice said, "They looked in the right place."

Some of the deep cuts in the granite were cul-de-sacs, and the dirt road turned sharply before them. Trains had entered them, and then backed up

across a switch and on toward the higher ground. Some cuts were low-sided, like the sunken lanes of England. In the course of the climb, the chaparral of the Sonoran Desert gave way to forest of ponderosa pine. The chaparral ran highest up south-facing slopes. We bypassed a tunnel, its ends now mostly caved in. When Moores and his three sisters were children, their grandfather convinced them that the tunnel was the home of a monster known as the Geehan. Long before they were born—after the mining scheme failed and the rails were removed—the Geehan moved in.

Crown King was at six thousand feet, in a subsummit swale—a few dozen buildings, spread through a mile of forest. When the air was still, the people could hear vehicles far down the switchbacks, climbing. They could tell from the rattles who was approaching. In the Crown King that Moores returned to now, not a great deal had changed. The same old welcome sign stood on the outskirts:

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The main street was a rocky swath of white granitic dust. Two pickups were parked by a retaining wall below the veranda of the general store. An apple tree thirty feet high grew out of the veranda. In a window, a red neon ring circled the word "Lite" under the painted words "U.S. Post Office." There was an old anonymous gas pump, still dispensing gas. It served the moun-



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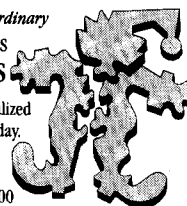
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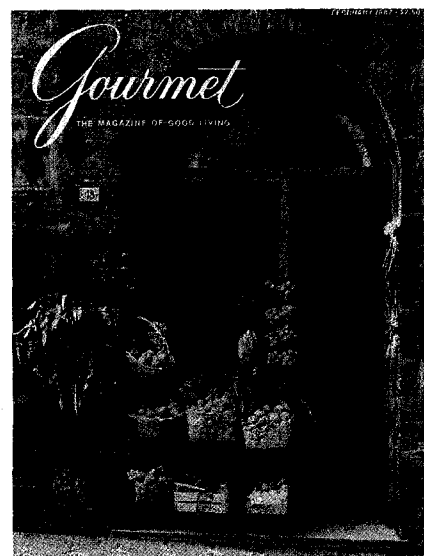
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tain. A white pole beside it flew the American flag.

Roads threading the declivities above Crown King led to various mines—gold mines, mainly, and silver and zinc—one of which served as the town well. The air and the forest were so dry, the community so high, that a ready source of water was beyond imagining. Yet water emerged from fissures at the Philadelphia Mine. In these exceptionally arid mountains, monsoonal rains arrive in August. Moores remembered an August day when four and a half inches fell in a single hour.

Crown King now had four telephone lines, four parties on each line. In the nineteen-forties, when Moores was growing up, there was one line. When you turned the crank of one of the four phones in town, three other people picked up phones to hear your outgoing call. I asked him what else especially came back to him about those years. He said, "The smell of warm pine needles and the sound of the wind."

Under the ponderosas, on the dry needles, were granitic boulders. Playing hide-and-seek, he had hidden behind the boulders. When he and his friends played baseball, the bases were rocks. One year, there were six students in the Crown King school—grades 1 through 8. Usually, there were ten or fifteen. Moores climbed half a mile from home to school, sometimes in fairly deep snow. We went up there now, and found that a room was being added to the building, and thus it would become a two-room school. Academic privies had served when Moores was a child. They had been replaced by indoor plumbing. The wood stove was gone. In the ceiling, the chimney hole was covered with a board. The old classroom was otherwise the same, with its tongue-and-groove walls of horizontal boards, its long span of lead pipe supporting a curtain so that one end of the room could serve as a stage. There was a personal computer on the teacher's desk. The Lombard piano was an upright that Moores remembered. Playing a few bars on it, he found it "more or less in tune."

When Moores was a child, there was a piano in Crown King that belonged to his grandmother Annie Moores. She was from San Francisco, where, as a girl, she had routinely

gone to the opera and returned home to play the scores from memory. After her husband became a miner and they began a life of moving from one remote mine to the next, her piano went with her.

It helped that he owned trucks. From the railroad at Flagstaff to the Colorado River he had trucked the steel of the Navajo Bridge. His name was Eldridge Moores, and he was primarily a small-scale pick-and-shovel all-around hard-rock miner whose body temperature became progressively higher in the presence of lead, zinc, copper, silver, and gold. In the middle nineteen-thirties, he was mining copper in the Verde River drainage when he decided to pick up the piano and haul it to Crown King. His son, Eldridge Moores, father of Eldridge Moores, worked for his father, Eldridge Moores. His son's wife, Geneva Moores, had a piano as well, and the two families in concert, in two Ford trucks, doremifasoled up the mountain.

Eldridge III—the future tectonicist, ophioliteologist, structural geologist, editor of *Geology*—was born in 1938. One of his earliest memories is of his father and grandfather saying that no one seriously engaged in mining would seek or follow the advice of a geologist. They said it often. Typically, Eldridge's father would say, "Huh—geologists. They think they can see through solid rock."

Five miles from Crown King and a thousand feet higher, Eldridge's grandfather tunnelled into solid rock. The family's Gladiator Mine was just below the ridgeline of the mountains—a ten-man operation that grossed about a million dollars in ten years. Gladiator was a gold mine with enough lead and zinc to be declared a strategic industry in the Second World War, so it was not shut down, as most gold mines were. The shafts and adits (tunnels) went into the mountain several hundred feet to the stopes—chambers with five-foot ceilings, angled with the gold vein at sixty degrees. They loosened the ore with pneumatic drills, and took out fifty thousand tons,

getting half an ounce of gold per ton.

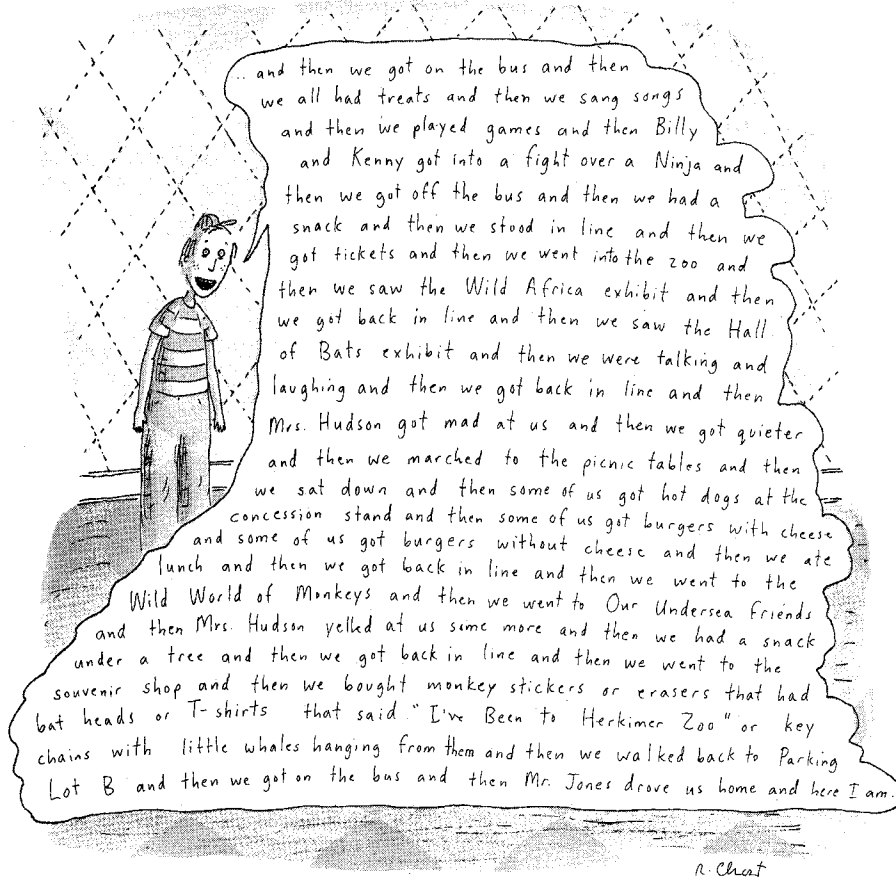
The main shaft was now covered with chicken wire and surrounded by rusting debris—a contusion in the mountain a century old. "You rely on the competence of the rock to keep the chambers open," Moores said. "You play it by ear. You develop a sense of what the good ore looks like. If it had a lot of flashing sulphides, it was ore." The sulphides were galena (lead) and sphalerite (zinc). "The lead and the zinc betrayed the gold. They were only two or three per cent of the rock, but they were the clue."

Soon after the war, Eldridge's grandfather moved on to something else, and his father, having found a place below the summit where the gold vein outcropped, started a new adit there. The mine was called War Eagle. Modestly, it would support his family, with three hundred ounces a year. He went at it first with a pick and shovel, then with a hand-driven bull prick, and finally with a pneumatic drill, as the rock, ever farther from weather, became fresher and harder. In ten minutes, he could shovel a ton of rock, enough to fill an ore cart. "It was backbreaking work," Moores said. "But my father had a tough back." When we looked into the small, cavellike mouth of War Eagle, Moores said, "There's the vein. That little fault zone—that's what it is. I was here when he started the mine. The rusty streak in the rock marks the vein he was following. These old miners had a very good sense of where things would be in rocks. They would look at an outcrop, see a streak of iron oxide, and say, 'Ah, yes, this must be the vein.' They ranked geologists with garbagemen and dogcatchers. Most of the geologists they met were starving third-rate consulting geologists who came into small-mining areas looking for money. The tectonic and chemical models weren't in place yet, so the understanding of ore deposits wasn't very good. The miners had an intuitive feel for where things would be that was probably better than what a geologist coming in cold could give them. My dad sure thought that geologists were a worthless bunch, basically—people who came into the country to write reports for mining companies telling them what they wanted to hear."

Helping at War Eagle, Moores as a boy shoved the hand-propelled ore



THE LITANY OF FUN



carts from the working face to the ore bin, outside the mine. He emptied the carts on the grizzly, an inclined steel grid. The smaller stuff fell through, into the bin. (Ore-vein rock, generally weaker than the rock around it, tended to break into small pieces.) The larger chunks rolled onto a steel platform. By hand, he sorted them, choosing what he thought was good ore, and heaving rejects aside. From the ore bin, the rock went down chutes into trucks. After the war, his father had acquired an International ten-wheeler with six-wheel drive, capable of hauling twelve tons. When Moores was learning to drive, his version of the family sedan with the automatic shift in the supermarket parking lot on Sunday morning was an International ten-wheeler between Crown King and the summit. The mine's driveway, five miles long, had been engineered and was maintained by his father. Not the least of its features was a railless plunge on the outboard side. As we inched along it in the cruise-control pickup, Moores said, "This was my first driving experience, this road. In that International, I was one scared little teen-ager." As

he practiced, he dragged a road grader behind the truck. His father was back there, working the grader.

Sometimes he rode with his father to Phoenix in the big truck, on a dirt road flanked by desert, first encountering pavement in country that is now city, seven miles north of the state capitol. The hot truck stank of transmission oil. When the truck quit, they revived it. Sometimes they would be stranded for hours by a flash flood.

The family lived for some years in the most imposing house in Crown King, which they rented for twenty-five dollars a month. It is squarish, board-and-batten, on a rocky platform behind a retaining wall. A refrigerator reposed on the front porch. Moores called that "an emblem of rural Arizona." When he was nine, his family bought another board-and-batten house, with a yard of dry needles and granite boulders. It was light blue now, with white trim and a tin roof, and suggested, in its setting, the quarters of a forest ranger. There were two bedrooms and three daughters, so his father brought a shack from the mine and set it on a poured slab, six feet

by nine, and that was his son's free-standing bedroom. The main house was heated by unvented butane. The well went dry for several months each year. Eldridge's father put a tank of water in a dump truck, and raised the body. The family had its own water tower.

At the age of ten or eleven, Eldridge noticed with some interest that two of the large rocks close to the house were different in color, yet each was called granite. He was somewhat puzzled, but his hair did not stand on end. This was the one touch of geological curiosity that he felt throughout his youth in the mining camp. In his portable bedroom, there was nothing that even vaguely resembled a mineral collection. Where a budding herpetologist might have a closet full of snakes, a chemist a set of volatile powders, a cosmologist a wheel of stars, Eldridge had musical instruments. When his father opened War Eagle, Eldridge's interest was keen: "I wanted them to find the good stuff, because it put shoes on the feet. But I wasn't curious about the vein."

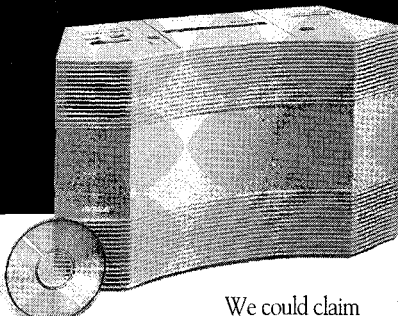
Any rock that was hard and dark was blue diorite to the miners; anything platy was schist; everything else was granite. One did not have to go to Caltech to learn this geology. Endlessly, his father and other miners talked about the provender of rock. They sat on their porches in front of the refrigerators and reminisced about mining camps, mining failures, and yields in ounces per ton of ore. Eldridge's mind was elsewhere. Even before he entered his teens, he dreamed of places far from the ridge. He would forever remember Carl Vanlaningham, a friend of his father, remarking one day, with a glance around town, "Optimism is highest at the beginning. A mining camp has nowhere to go but down." Eldridge as a child had sensed this in a general and pervasive way. One day when he was accompanying his parents from one switchback to the next on the interminable road to Crown King, he suddenly burst out, "I've had it! If I never do another thing, I'm going to go out of here and stay out of here." His parents looked sad. He was ten years old.

He finished eighth grade and enrolled at North Phoenix High School when he was twelve. His father had built a house on the outskirts of Phoenix to accommodate his children's

education. Eldridge's mother stayed with them. After she became the teacher at the Crown King school, his sister Carolyn (two years older than he) was in charge of the household in Phoenix. Moores' developing opinion of developing Phoenix was a good deal lower than his opinion of Crown King. As he would explain in later years, "there's something wrong with a place that looks to Miami for its cultural leadership."

In high school, his principal interests were music and history. Teachers urged the cello on him, because his hands were large. He has nearly perfect pitch. "If you ask me to sing a note, I can get within a few cycles per second. If I'm listening to a piece on the radio, I can tell you what key it's being played in." In Crown King, while his father struck notes on the family piano Eldridge with his back turned could identify the notes. Eldridge has said of his father, "Music meant a lot to him, too. But, as he saw things, men didn't go into music. They had to go into something that was practical." To fulfill the high school's requirements, Eldridge also studied science and math. He was not inwardly driven toward a scientific or technological career, but he was already being nudged in that direction by what he has described as "a regional force." He explains, "In that part of the United States, it was assumed that any bright high-school student would go into science or engineering." His grade-point average was almost unimprovable. North Phoenix High School took particular pride in steering its best students toward the California Institute of Technology. Caltech offered him a larger scholarship than any other school to which he applied. Tractably, compliantly—sixteen years old—he went to Caltech.

Academically, he was at home there. For him, Caltech proved to be no more formidable than the one-room school in Crown King. Eventually, however, the day arrived when he had to choose a major—to decide, in effect, what he wanted to do with his life—and he experienced a sort of intellectual ambush. To his considerable surprise, he came to realize that there was only one discipline at Caltech that appealed to him strongly enough for such a commitment, and the discipline was geology. Under all his early indifferent attitudes, not to mention his avowals



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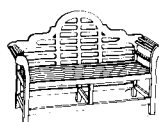
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to escape from Crown King, there had obviously lain ambivalence. Evidently, what he thought he hated he did not altogether hate. He wondered still about those colors in granite. He may not have cared how the gold got out of the mountains, but he did want to know how the mountains came there to receive the gold. He remembers looking out through classroom windows, seeing the San Gabriel Mountains, and wishing he were up there. In the years ahead of him, he decided, he would like to combine history with science, and to travel the world out-of-doors. Those prerequisites could be combined, and re-stated as a single word. So he majored in geology. Today, if you look at him closely through your hand lens and ask him why he did that, he will give a little shrug and say, "I grew up in the mountains."

He will also say, "I had a hard time coming to grips with going into geology. While I was in graduate school, I still wondered if I could make a career in music."

At the mouth of the Gladiator Mine, we set up a bench with a discarded plank, resting it on discarded ores. Not many feet away were irises planted by his grandmother Annie Moores, whose house had once stood beside them. Just below the ridgeline, looking east, we ate sandwiches and spread on the ground before us the geologic map of Arizona. Six million acres of the original were also spread before us. We could see the Superstition Mountains, east of Phoenix. We could see the Four Peaks of Mazatzal Land. We could see a hundred miles. I remembered him once shaking his head with amazement at the joy experienced by a paleontologist who, in ten hours bent over in a blistering Wyoming gully, might find a couple of sharks' teeth. "I'm a ridge man, not a ravine man," Moores remarked at the time. "I like to get up and look out." Now in the foreground three thousand feet below us was the valley we had crossed in coming to Crown King. The axis of the valley, he said, running his finger along a black line on the map, was the Shylock Fault—"a major zone of tectonism that is reminiscent of major *mélange* zones that characterize consuming plates." Like the rock of the mine, the rock of the valley was Precambrian. He had

found there—in sequence—serpentines, gabbros, and basalts. Pillow basalts. All this had suggested to him "plate activity eighteen hundred million to two thousand million years ago"—a collision, a docking, an addition to the continent arriving. He had published an abstract on the subject. Precambrian tectonics are, in their great antiquity, extremely difficult to read, but the rock of the valley suggested to him that he grew up in exotic terrane.

The granite of Crown King, he said, was technically quartz monzonite—a granite sibling, almost a twin. Where it contained a little iron, it would be pink. It had come into the earth molten, as a pluton, about seventeen hundred and fifty million years ago, and the country rock it had intruded was the rock here at the mine. (We had crossed the contact driving up from Crown King.) The rock at the mine was a rusty-looking, darkish, metavolcanic metasediment, two thousand million years old. Kicking at it, Moores said, "I would rank these rocks as not particularly easy to work with."

I thought he was referring to the picks, the shovels, the pneumatic drills—the backbreaking labors of his father and his grandfather. But he meant the geology.

"It's taken me a long time to get this stuff out of my system," he continued. "Metal deposits are telling you something interesting about tectonic systems." Thus, by the front door, his interests returned to the place where

he developed. The livelihood of his family had depended on the yield of this rock. The relationship of an Arizona pluton to the rock in which it had ballooned as magma was now heating his imagination, as, before, it had heated his grandfather's and his father's.

They died in 1949 and 1979. "I don't have gold fever," Eldridge said. "When I get it, I stamp it out. I avoid the study of ore deposits, except as they are a scientific subject. Small mining is dirty, dangerous, boring, and dismal. After a while, watching people do it gets to you. The prospect of doing that made me want to get out, get away. I developed a hankering for places that were dust-free. I promised myself I was going to live in a place that was green and cool. Basically, this kind of mining is a futile operation. No

one ever gets rich. It's got to be something in your blood."

I said, "Wouldn't you say it's in *your* blood?"

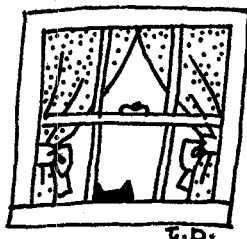
He said, "Sort of like an antibody."

FROM the Auburn suture of the Smartville Block, where you glimpse for the first time (westbound) the Great Central Valley of California, the immense flatland runs so far off the curve of the earth that its western horizon makes a simple line to the extremes of peripheral vision. In California's exceptional topography—with its crowd-gathering glacial excavations, its High Sierran hanging wall, its itinerant Salinian coast—nothing seems more singular to me than the Great Central Valley. It is far more planar than the plainest of the plains. With respect to its surroundings, it arrived first. At its edges are mountains that were set up around it like portable screens.

While looking out on the Great Central Valley one time, Moores described a winter day when he took off from Newfoundland in a snowstorm and flew to Toronto, landed there in strafing sleet, and flew on to Chicago (horizontal sleet), and then on across the high blizzarded plains and the Rockies (whited out) and the snowed-under Basin and Range to descend over the snowpacked Sierra, and bank toward a landing in a world that was apple green. The Great Central Valley was cool and moist and not cold and frozen, and for him, now, it was home.

It's not always cool, or—Heaven knows—moist. Trunks of fruit and nut trees are painted white to keep them from being sunburned. Summer days commonly rise above a hundred, but the air will fall toward the fifties at night.

The ground surface is so nearly level that you have no sense of contour. A former lake bed can be much the same, where sediments laid in still water have become a valley floor. Such valleys tend to be intimate, however, while this one is fifty miles wide and four hundred miles long. It is not a former lake, although in large part it is a former swamp. Geology characteristically repeats itself around the world and down through time, but—with the possible exceptions of the Chilean Longitudinal Valley and the Dalbandin Trough in Pakistan—the Great Central Valley of California has no counterpart on this planet.



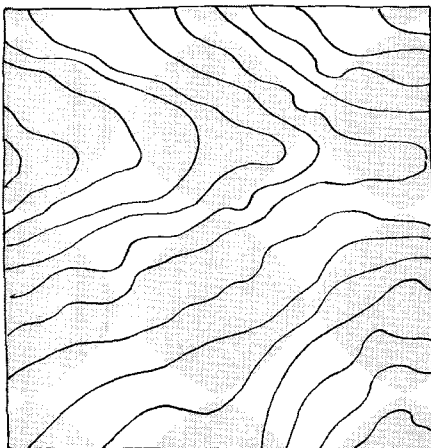
T.D.

Engineers designing roads in the valley are frustrated by the lack of topographical relief. They have nothing to cut when they're in need of fill. If a new highway must cross over something, like a railroad track, the road builders go back half a mile or so and sink the highway into the earth in order to dig out enough dirt to build ramps to a bridge jumping the railroad. From the middle of this earthen sea, the flanking mountains are so low and distant that the slightest haze will give you the feeling that you are out of sight of land.

Over open ocean, the number of miles you can see before your line of sight goes off the curve of the earth is roughly equal to the square root of your eye level in feet. If your eyes are forty-nine feet up, you can see seven miles to sky. The formula is of very little use on land but is practical in this valley. When Darwin, off the *Beagle*, was travelling in Argentina, he developed a way of sensing the subtle contours of the pampas: if the horizon seemed to be unusually far, he said, the terrain was imperceptibly concave; if it seemed unusually near, the terrain was imperceptibly convex. He could have tested his proposition in the Great Central Valley. Much of it is near sea level, but it does rise. North from Interstate 80, the valley rises steadily, with a grade so imperceptible it is measured by laser. Moores compares this rise to the inclined sides of a mid-ocean ridge. With respect to the abyssal plains, the ridges rise about six thousand feet, but over so great a distance that, in his words, "if you were put down on a mid-ocean ridge flank and told to walk toward the ridge crest you would not know which way to go." The grade of a fast-spreading ocean ridge, like the East Pacific Rise, is about the same as the grade of the Great Central Valley between Sacramento and Redding.

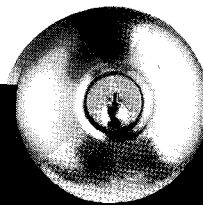
You watch magpies over the valley, larcenous even in flight. You watch crop dusters—buzzing up and down, up and down, like trapped houseflies. Rice is sown from the air. Where DDT was once laid down in an aerosol, fish—as living insecticides—are now dropped from airplanes. They live in the checks, as paddies are called, and eat larvae. In this essential flatness, where there is no visible relief, instruments can find a minuscule astonishing topography; as if on a smooth

board very slightly weathered, the unevenness of the land is discovered. Your eye can't discern it, but if you were a rice rancher you would be dealing with it every day. Rice seedlings need to stand in enough water to cover them but not enough to kill them, and this delicate margin has caused rice fields—from the air—to reveal the structure of the valley.



When the rice was first planted, vehicles bearing surveyors' rods drove in circles around fixed transits to discover the valley's contour lines, and along them berms were nudged up a few inches to contain the shallow water. Sinuously paralleling the contours, the berms made the rice fields look, from the air, like supermagnified topographic maps. They showed tectonism expressible in centimetres. They showed the noses of anticlines, the troughs of synclines, microfolds, depressions—all too minimal to be detected by the human eye. Even very shallow water would run off these surfaces in every direction. So the rice plantations were terraced—each check, in altitude, scanty different from the next. Just as volcanologists use lasers to sense expansion in eruptive ground, rice ranchers have in recent years surveyed their rice fields with rotating beams. Contours are adjusted by the laser-controlled blades of earthmoving triplane levelers. The newer berms tend to be straight and less indicative of the geologic structures beneath them. There are five hundred thousand acres of rice in California. The climate is much the same as the climate in Egypt, which has the highest-yielding acreage of any rice country in the world. In the office of Jim Hill, who teaches rice at Davis, a sign says "Have a Rice Day."

The Great Central Valley is drained by two principal rivers, one flowing south and the other north. They meet



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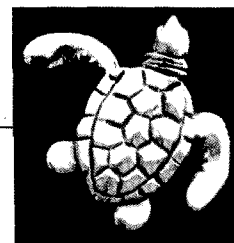
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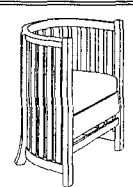
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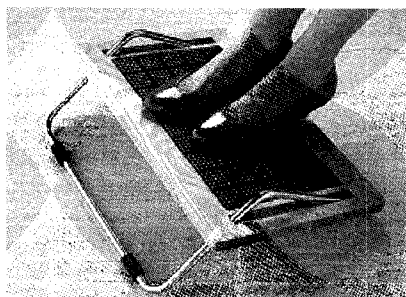
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in the valley and discharge themselves together into San Francisco Bay. The north-flowing river is the San Joaquin. The south-flowing river is the Sacramento, with its tributary the Feather River, which is dammed to reserve the snowmelt of the Sierra Nevada, not only to flood the rice fields and irrigate the other crops of the valley but also to travel six hundred miles in a life-support tube that is taped to the nose of Los Angeles. Rivers with common deltas are rare in the world. It would be difficult to name more pairs of them than the Kennebec and the Androscoggin, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, the Tigris and the Euphrates, the Sacramento and the San Joaquin.

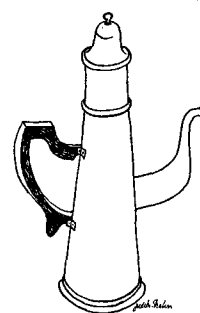
The floodplains of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin are dozens of miles wide. Before they were cleared and drained and checkered like kitchen floors in shades of patterned green, they were known as the tule or the tules or the tule lands, in honor of the tough bulrushes that (pretty much alone) were able to survive the scouring inundations of spring. Sacramento stands in the tule. To the conventional wisdom that one ought never to build on a floodplain, California has responded with its capital city. Old houses of Sacramento are in a sense upside down. Long exterior stairways lead to porches and entrance halls on upper floors. Whole neighborhoods are on stilts.

Emerging from the Sierra foothills among the blue oaks of the grass woodland, Interstate 80 rests on gravelly loams until it reaches the silty clays and humic gleys of Sacramento. Now I-80 has become a long elevated causeway that reaches across rice and sugar beets, marsh grass and milo, as if it were in search of Key West instead of San Francisco. In years of exceptional

floods, fifty million acre-feet of water have come under the causeway. Some row crops and tree crops are on the deeper lighter soils near the river—the natural levees, where floodwaters give up the larger part of the material they carry. Eventually, imperceptibly, the ground beyond the floodplain goes up a few inches onto the outer lenses of an alluvial fan, a fine loam that has spilled eastward from the Coast Ranges like thin paint. The difference it makes is widely expressed in field crops, truck

crops, orchards. In soil taxonomy, there are ten groups in the world. Nine are in this valley. Each is suited to a differing roster of crops. Plums, kiwis, apricots, oranges, olives, nectarines—it is the North American fruit forest. In some parts of the valley, roots are inhibited by a zone of hardpan. The soil's B-horizon, firmly cemented with silica, is like a concrete floor. Farmers used to bore holes in it and grow trees in the holes. Now they use diesel-powered earth-rippers. Especially, this is the valley of celery and lemons, beets and peaches, grapes and walnuts, carrots and cantaloupes, lettuce and tomatoes. That is to say, the Great Central Valley of California grows more of each of those things than are grown in any other state of the union.

In 1905, the College of Agriculture of the University of California, in Berkeley, set up an experimental farm in Davis, Yolo County, in the valley's center. In 1925, the farm itself became an agricultural college. In 1959, it became a general campus in the state's university system. The livestock-judging pavilion is now a Shakespearean theatre. Under skyscraping water towers, the ground-hugging university is of such breadth and grandeur that it has its own beltway. It may have more bicycles than Shanghai. But Davis is still the main agricultural research center in California, and just outside the glassy postmodern geology building are sties containing massive monolithic pigs.



From the geology-building roof, Moores has looked across the immense flat ground and picked out features of Yosemite, a hundred miles to the southeast. Fifty miles southwest, he sees the detached oddness of Mt. Diablo, protruding beside the Coast Ranges. Looking the other way, he has seen Lassen—a white cone on the northern horizon, a hundred and forty miles distant—and, on nearer ground, the Sutter Buttes, a recent volcanic extrusion that has left a ring of jagged hills standing in the valley like a coronet set on a table. These landmarks embrace more than six million acres, or—in one look around—a landscape larger than Massachusetts. It is less than half of the valley.

When Moores arrived, in the nineteen-sixties, ten thousand people lived in Davis. Although the number has in-

creased fivefold, Davis is still a quiet town, still a field station. From its shaded streets, crops and orchards reach out in all directions. To an open-air market in Davis on Saturdays farmers bring their lime thyme, their elephant-heart plums, their lemon cucumbers, bitter melons, and peaches the size of grapefruit. They bring tomatoes that are larger than the peaches, and tomatoes of every possible size down to tomatoes the size of pearls. Yolo County grows about as many tomatoes as Florida does. Yolo County grows ketchup in the form of "processing" tomatoes that could sit on a tee and be driven two hundred yards.

The Mooreses' turn-of-the-century farmhouse is "in the county," down a long thoroughfare of black walnuts at the edge of town. Their street is named Patwin, for the tribe that preceded the farms and the walnuts. The house faces north, across tomato fields. From the east windows you can sometimes see the low line of the Sierra, and from the west windows the Coast Ranges, but there is no sense of valley. The word seems misapplied. As the edges of a flat so vast, those montane curbs fail to suggest the V that a valley brings to mind.

When Moores looks out upon landscapes, he sees beneath them other landscapes. Like most geologists, he carries in his head a portfolio of ancient scenes, worlds overprinting previous worlds. He sees tundra in Ohio, dense forestation on New Mexican mesas, the Persian Gulf in the Painted Desert. Once, after a day in the Sierra, while he was sitting outside at home beneath what appeared to be a chandelier of apricots, I asked him to describe this one particle of the planet, his own back yard, at differing times. He responded in the present tense, as geologists often do, while his narrative went backward, scene by scene—episodically, stratigraphically—disassembling and dissolving California.

In the late-middle Pleistocene, when pulses of alpine ice are appearing on the Sierra, this place would be much the same, on the natural levee of a creek, surrounded not by fruit trees but by swamps. Valley oaks are on the dry ground, inches above the swamps. The mountains—east and west—are even lower. Mt. Diablo is not there. It has "scarcely begun to grow."

Three million years before the present—in the Piacenzian Age of late



Bernal Shaw

"I understand they're phasing out their marriage."

Pliocene time—neither the Coast Ranges nor the Sierra is above the horizon. From the hinge under the Great Central Valley, the Sierra fault block begins to rise. The tectonic behavior of the Coast Ranges is different. Sluggishly, they come up from the deep. They have no integral structure. They are a fragmentary mass, a marine clutter. They will be known in geology as the Franciscan *mélange*. Appearing first as islands, the Franciscan pushes against the level sediments of the coastal plain and bends them upward until they are nearly vertical. Up through the *mélange* come volcanoes that spew lava and tuffaceous ash in and around the Napa Valley. There are active volcanoes on the crest of the Sierra. And between the nascent ranges the Sutter Buttes erupt.

I have a question. Why all this Fourth of July geology as recently as three million years ago, when all we have in these latitudes now are run-of-the-mill earthquakes?

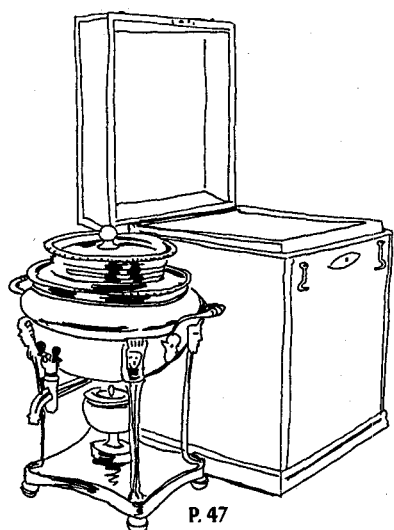
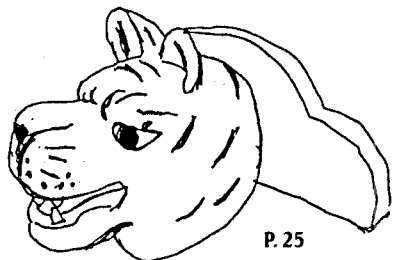
Because in the Pliocene a triple junction of lithospheric plates is just off San Francisco, Moores replies. A subduction zone is dying out as its trench turns into the San Andreas Fault. The volcanism relates to that. For tens of millions of years, a lithospheric plate of considerable size lay between North America and the Pacific Plate. It is

known in geology as the Farallon Plate. By the late Pliocene, this great segment of crust and mantle, possibly at one time a tenth of the shell of the earth, had in large part been consumed. Fragments of it remain: in the north, the Gorda Plate and the Juan de Fuca Plate, whose subduction under North America has produced Lassen Peak, Mt. Shasta, Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, Glacier Peak, and the rest of the volcanoes of the Cascades; in the south, the Cocos Plate and the Nazca Plate, whose subduction has created Central America and elevated the Andes. For tens of millions of years, the Farallon Plate went under the western margin of North America, while North America gradually scraped off the Franciscan *mélange* of coast-range California. To the west, under the ocean, was the spreading center that divided the Farallon Plate from the Pacific Plate. As the Farallon Plate, moving eastward, was consumed, the spreading center came ever closer to California. At Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, the Pacific Plate first touched North America, twenty-nine million years before the present. Where it touched, the trench ceased to function, the spreading center ceased to function, and the plate boundary became a transform fault. It was only a few miles long at first, but steadily the great

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fault propagated from Los Angeles and Santa Barbara to the north and to the south, shutting the trench like a closing zipper. The triple junction of the Farallon Plate, the Pacific Plate, and the North American Plate migrated northward with the northern end of the fault. And so, in the Pliocene, three million years ago, the triple junction was off San Francisco. The volcanoes in the Sierra were the dying embers of Farallon subduction. The volcanoes in the Napa Valley and adjacent coastal ranges were a result of the new fault pulling the earth apart at kinks and bends. The eruption of the Sutter Buttes almost surely relates to the dying subduction or the new plate motions but is, as they say, not well understood. Now, in the Holocene, the triple junction is still moving north. For the moment, it is at Cape Mendocino, where the San Andreas ends and what is left of the Farallon Trench continues. That is how things appear, anyway, in present theory.

Six million years before the present, in the late Miocene, Moores and his apricot tree would be in or beside a saltwater bay that covers most of the Great Central Valley. It is full of tuna and other large fish, because an upwelling of cold water (like the upwelling in the Humboldt Current off modern Peru) has filled the bay with nutrients. There is no Golden Gate. The bay's outlet is at Monterey. A terrane is moving along the west side of the San Andreas Fault. Carrying with it the sites of San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Big Sur, Monterey, and Salinas, it will someday be known as Salinia.

In the Eocene, fifty million years ago, Moores' back yard in Davis is mud at the bottom of the Farallon ocean, some thirty miles offshore, on the continental shelf. As Eocene rivers pour into these waters—having advanced their gravels from Tibet-like altitudes and across the low country that will one day rise as the Sierra—they cut submarine canyons through the future Great Valley. The rock that preserves this story is a marine shale, loaded with shelf creatures of Eocene age. Below Davis, in the Great Valley Sequence of sediments, it lies about twenty-five hundred feet down.

In the Cretaceous, some eighty or ninety million years ago, Moores' address is a precariously inclined deep-

sea fan—a spilling of sediment down the continental slope toward the trench where the Farallon Plate is disappearing. About sixty miles wide, the trench lies in the space that will one day separate San Francisco and Fairfield. As the slab of the Farallon Plate melts beneath North America, it contributes to the magmas of the great batholith and the superjacent volcanoes of the ancestral Sierra Nevada.

At the end of the Jurassic, about twenty million years after the docking of the Smartville Block, another island arc comes in and docks against Smartville, more or less directly under Moores and his tree. Geology will call it the Coast Range Ophiolite, and it will lie under forty thousand feet of Great Valley sediments and be warped into the coastal mountains. One of its large fragments will end up in the Oakland hills.

When Smartville docks, in the Jurassic, its individual islands possibly resemble Hokkaido, Kyushu, and Honshu. The trench closes east of Sacramento and a new one opens west of Davis and begins to consume the Farallon Plate. The downgoing slab of the Farallon Plate depresses the region and creates the structural basin that will fill up with sediments and become the Great Central Valley. Since there will be no Sierra Nevada and no Coast Ranges for nearly a hundred and fifty million years to follow, the result will be a valley that is not a conventional river valley but a structural basin filled to the brim with sediments that (almost wholly) do not derive from the mountains around it.

Before Smartville, blue ocean—extracontinental, abyssal ocean. In the earliest Triassic, the site of Davis is far out to sea. The continental shelf is back in Idaho and Nevada. North America in these latitudes has been growing. Two terranes have already come in. But here at the dawn of the Mesozoic the continent has not yet received so much as a hint of California.

—JOHN MCPHEE

(This is the second part of a three-part article.)

Yesterday, the owners of three of the spas, where female employees allegedly sold massages that included sexual contact to undercover police officers, turned themselves into police.—*Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Too late, guys.

MUSICAL EVENTS

Master and Pupil

SHORTLY before his death, in April, Olivier Messiaen was looking forward to two big performances this year: the première, in November, of the immense piece he had recently finished for the New York Philharmonic, "Éclairs sur l'Audé," and the Salzburg production, in August, of his opera "Saint François d'Assise," the work's first full staging since it was introduced at the Paris Opera, in 1983. As it was, this Salzburg performance had to go forward at a delicate moment: too late for the composer's participation, too soon to have been freed from his expectations, or at least from other people's expectations of his expectations. Messiaen, who understood resurrection, would perhaps have recognized how death bestows a liberation on any artist's works. Until that time, they exist in a chrysalid state, while the creator sets the terms for performance and interpretation. Only afterward can they take wing.

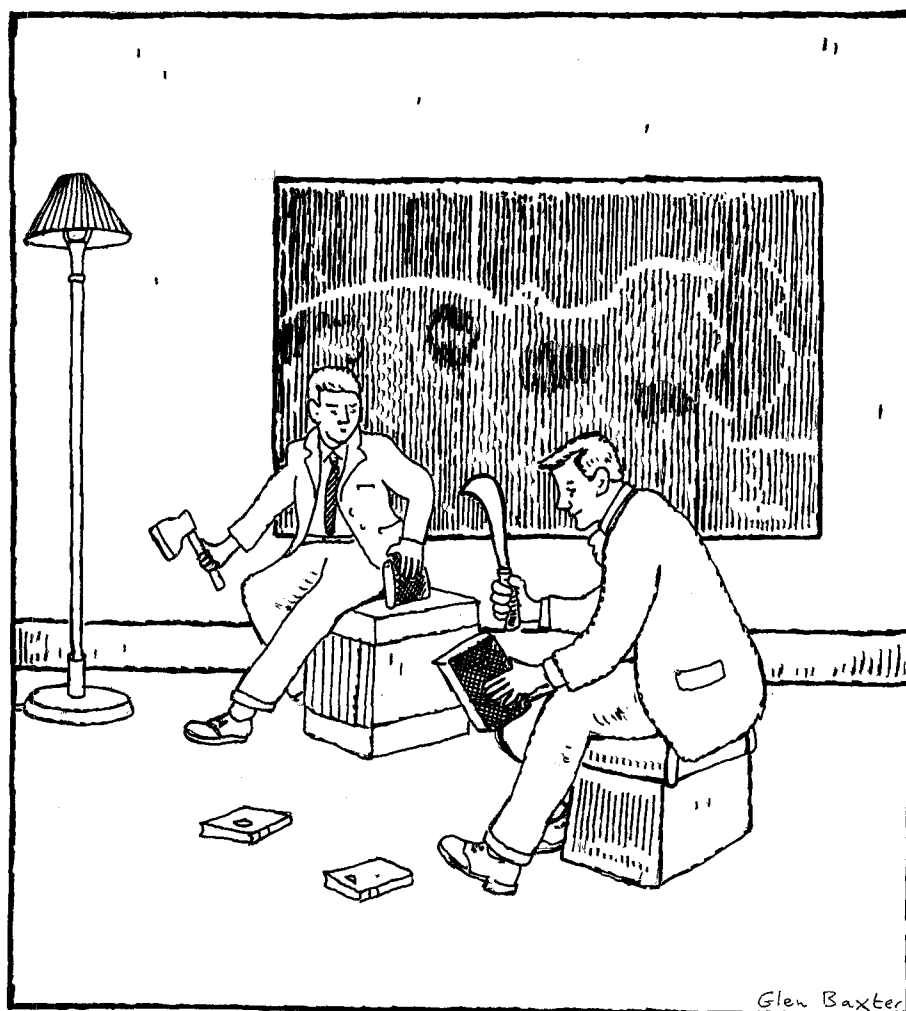
The present betwixt-and-between condition, where "Saint François" is concerned, may account for the unsettling mixture of glory and gaucheness in this production. Its hardware must have been in preparation well before Messiaen's death, since José van Dam, the singer of the central role, mentioned in the Salzburg program book how his first contacts with Peter Sellars, the director, had given him the impression of a "Saint Francis at the center of projections," and Messiaen himself, in another program-book interview, spoke of his intention to be in Salzburg in order to "prevent wrong notes in the music but also . . . in the lighting." One can infer that he gave his blessing to the presenting of his opera as a sophisticated light show, as well he might, since he often talked about experiencing colors when he heard or imagined music. Besides, James Ingalls' lighting machinery, the production's most startling near-success, surely needed more than the four months since the composer's death to design and assemble.

It dominated the set: slightly tilted

to the right, a great square frame of fluorescent tubes, a grid of parallels, perpendiculars, and diagonals capable of signalling in white or in rainbow colors. Harmonies of blue and red stripes, sometimes with cyan or magenta, realized the color scheme that Messiaen associated with his most characteristic mode, the scale alternating whole tones with semitones. At the same time, the harmonies vividly recalled what the composer probably admired before all other human artifacts, the stained-glass windows of Chartres and the Sainte-Chapelle. But these were only some of the possibilities. Slants of blue, green, and yellow suggested an abstract summertime outdoors, a landscape for those birds whose songs resound—discreetly or with grand, affirmative amplification—throughout the orchestral score. A huge

gold cross could shine out, or the apparatus could become a checkerboard of white lines, making the eye blink and jump, or else, for the scene of the Saint's stigmatization, there could be just five rays of sore red.

Many of these effects were breathtaking. And yet they were not quite breathtaking enough. Whenever Messiaen spoke about his synesthetic experience of light alongside sound, the impression he conveyed was a kinetic one, of colors swirling, bulging, rolling. Even his beloved stained-glass windows have their dynamism, since the repartitioning of the same few colors, as the eye moves down or across the field, shakes on the retina to create a visual fizz, a stationary blaze. The Salzburg square, almost throughout, produced its effects symmetrically and slowly and carefully, though when the end came one understood why Mr. Sellars and Mr. Ingalls had reserved their dazzling flurry of illuminations for this gigantic C major of joy as the Saint's soul reaches its home in



"WITH FIRST NOVELS I TEND TO FAVOR THIS APPROACH," EXPLAINED THE SENIOR EDITOR.

Heaven. For the four hours up to then, it was too clear what was going on. The colors couldn't match the music in speed of movement, and the effect was ponderously mechanical as one bar after another switched into life. It might help if the technology could be screened, or if some other way could be found to lessen the obviousness of the means, to unloose the light beams from the deadweight of their scaffolding. This is worth wishing for, since the production is to be seen again in Paris in December (but not, now, in Los Angeles, though it was the Los Angeles Philharmonic, under Esa-Pekka Salonen, that was giving the colors of the score their stupendous re-creation).

If the giant light box is an idea still working its way toward achievement, other aspects of the production are, more simply, either brilliant or so misguided as to appear grotesque in a work created on such a gigantic scale. The opera depicts, in Messiaen's words, "the progress of grace in Saint Francis's soul," but the progress it most powerfully exhibits is a progress of sounds. We don't watch Mr. van Dam as St. Francis becoming ever more spiritually translucent, for all that his is a colossal performance; the ostensible subject is dissolved into a pattern of sound, just as the subjects of stained-glass panels are dissolved into patterns of light. The essential manifestation is of the force, splendor, beauty, and variety to be drawn out of an orchestra, and the events of Francis's life, happening in eight scenes, are accessory to that. They govern shape and color to some degree; the stigmata scene, for instance, uses Messiaen's blackest, bleakest materials (exposed low-register sounds, abrupt twelve-note machinations, the nocturnal screech of an owl), in contrast with the triadic jubilation of the rest of the score. But the music is so overwhelming—again, there is the similarity with Chartres—as to go far beyond illustration.

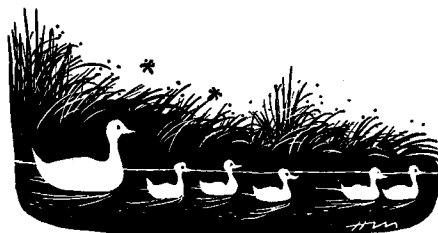
The dominance of the orchestra is expressed in two ways. In the first place, the instruments vastly outrange the voices in color and imagery. The whole opening scene is a duo for two baritones, the Saint and his disciple Brother Leo; much of the rest strongly features this same vocal type (Francis is onstage almost throughout), alternating only with a soprano for the Angel, a tenor for the Leper whom Francis cures, and a massive chorus.

By contrast, the orchestra is not only huge (a hundred and nineteen players) but exuberantly differentiated, having whole families of flutes and clarinets, a bulky brass section, a gamelanlike ensemble of tuned percussion (xylophones, vibraphones, glockenspiel, bells), a separate battery of woodblocks, triangles, drums, and other noisemakers, a full body of strings, and three ondes Martenot. (These electronic instruments—swooping, belching from the bass, or releasing the ethereal music of Heaven when the Angel plays his viol—were starkly prominent here.) More than that, the orchestral material is enormously richer than the vocal. While the voices generally maintain a slow chant, placed in Messiaen's modes but referring to the monastic tradition of Solesmes, the orchestra spins through a lifetime's discoveries. The ondes Martenot take us back to the "Turangalila" symphony; the Leper's music resuscitates an even earlier Messiaen; and all around these details the orchestra unfolds an exultation of colored chords, decisive rhythmic patterns, and birdcalls, these last ranging from croaks and shrieks to melodic utterances and rushes of ecstatic volubility. One can begin to imagine the opera Messiaen might have written, with human singers emulating his birds: a tantalizing avian conference. But this isn't it. The vocal writing in "Saint François" is extravagant only in its requirements for stamina (in the title role) and purity (in the frequent high entries of the Angel). In its lack of ostentation, it presents characters who are at the service of the work, as priests and acolytes are at the service of the drama they commemorate in a liturgy. One reason we feel we're seeing not St. Francis but, rather, someone solemnly taking on the role of St. Francis is that even this leading voice is so much abashed by the brilliance, stridency, and edge of the instruments.

But the orchestra doesn't only have a mastery of color; it exerts its reign over time. Psychological realism, which stirred the imaginations of Monteverdi,

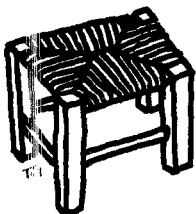
Mozart, Wagner, and Berg, is simply not an issue for Messiaen: there's no attempt to embody in the music the passage of time as it exists for the characters. Instead, they have to make their announcements within framed durations that the music, and predominantly the orchestral music, sets out. This is partly a matter of form. Messiaen works here, as in all his music, with separate blocks placed in apposition, with elements that stay defined and distinct, and build a pattern rather than a flow. It's the same with his libretto: first one thing, then another, then the first again, then the second again. The initial scene, going in this way, is much more like a set of versicles and responses than it is the record of two people talking, and the sublime unnaturalness of the vocabulary (Brother Leo starts the opera with this: "I'm afraid, I'm afraid, I'm afraid as I go, when the windows grow and darken, when the poinsettia's leaves cease to redden") is entirely appropriate to a work having absolutely nothing conversational about it. Then, again, the use of so many birdsongs as call signs and framing elements contradicts opera's usual claim to represent characters in developments of thought and feeling. The people of "Saint François" sing not when they want or need to but when the musical structure asks them to, and gradually, piece by piece, they set forth the sacred history they've been brought by the music to present. Any connections with conventional opera are incidental. Possibly because he was aware of himself as writing an opera, Messiaen was open to influences to a degree unusual in his mature music: he himself pointed to Pamina as the prototype of his Angel, though the atmosphere that wafts around the role is more Mélisande's, and the "theme of decision" comes from the end of the first act of "Götterdämmerung." But in its nature "Saint François" is apart. This isn't a drama that music accompanies, enhances, embraces, or enlarges; it's music within which some compartments of a drama are being manifested.

If the singing characters are so passive with regard to the music, how are they to behave while it's happening? Mr. Sellars' solution is ingenious. As in the most recent productions of his I've seen—"The Magic Flute" and "The Death of Klinghoffer"—he has the singers use their hands and arms a



great deal in formal movement, except that this time there's a deep point to the activity. He steers clear of the body language of Christian tradition—the crossings, benedictions, and genuflections—but establishes gestures and postures that intimate the sacred and, even more usefully, suggest people being acted upon by, rather than themselves acting, what they sing and hear. When Francis tries to calm Leo by explaining that fear and sacrifice are paths to “perfect joy,” his hands come together and make a slow dive down in front of his body, betokening a bliss that includes and surpasses the erotic (very true to Messiaen, this spirituality that rejoices in the flesh, though perhaps not so true to the historical Francis). When the Angel comes onstage, he accompanies his musical signature—an upward rush for strings and ondes, followed by a shrill twirl for oboe and clarinets—by an urgent motion of the hands, separating as they sweep up from the chest to above the head: he seems shocked by sound, possessed by it.

These, then, are two ways in which the production responds to its high challenge: in the lighting, not quite adequately, and in the singers' comportment of themselves, much more successfully. Other aspects of the staging pull against the fabric. Mr. Sellars and his set designer, Georges Tsyoin, scatter the scene with video monitors, half of them flying, half of them built into blocky rows, columns, or arches on the platform. After five minutes—we'd been treated to what was presumably a poinsettia bush, along with slots of a young monk suffering agony or ecstasy in a wilderness—I told myself to stop watching the things, but ever and over a flickering image would insist on attention. Not only was this irritating in itself but what one saw was crude in color and either superfluous or banal in subject. The birds were a case in point. The birdsongs that Messiaen creates with his wind instruments, ondes, and percussion are a salute to nature, but from a new world: they have very little still to do with the pecking, staring, puzzled creatures we were being shown onscreen. One might just as profitably watch film of a wheat field while eating a sandwich. Even worse—not just irrelevant but shockingly out of tune—was Mr.



Sellars' introduction of an elfin girl with crimson wings and costume to execute the Leper's dance and reappear at other points. This apparition was, I suppose, all the more horrid because the arrival of the singing Angel had come with such ease. Dawn Upshaw, dressed in quiet gray and blessedly wingless, had simply loomed up from behind a bank of the monitors: the supernatural slid into the proceedings without fuss, like an animal into water, and revealed itself in a far more persuasive form than that of the mauve-draped, polychrome-winged figure of the Paris première.

Possibly this was an example of Messiaen's death allowing a greater freedom, since his own requirement was definitely for something like the Paris version, as if he were using Fra Angelico as his costume designer, and since, too, he had looked forward to this production in the Salzburg Felsenreitschule partly because “the galleries hollowed out of the rock will be ideal for the appearances of the Angel.” One can be glad his naïveté was, for whatever reason, subverted. The Paris Angel was embarrassing: much better—finer and stronger—this entry of the divine messenger as a hushed secretary. Nor was this just an achievement of costume design (for which Dunya Ramicova was responsible), since Ms. Upshaw was singing the music with unalterable poise and accuracy and simplicity—indeed, with grace, with a tone so light and pure it seemed a glance from the mind, engaging nothing physical. And yet this large theatre was filled—and at the same time stilled by her dramatic presence.

The gray Angel, desentimentalized, was so successful I could wish Mr. Sellars and his team had gone further and found some alternative to monkish dress for Francis and his community. The work's value—and one might even say its sacredness—lies not in its borrowings from Christian history and ritual but, rather, in what it declares and embodies about human experience of time. As I've said, the subject is dispersed into a creation of time and sound, and the people we see in action are no longer simply those of the story. Franciscan habits risk bringing the whole thing down dramatically to the level of a Sunday-school pageant.

But the musical performances were



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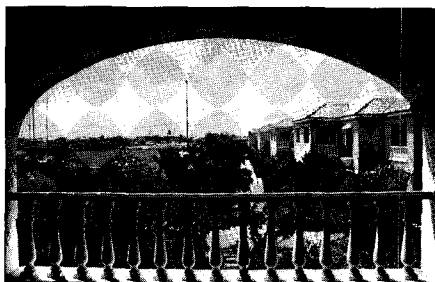
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in another realm. Mr. van Dam—darker, graver than in Paris nine years ago—was again majestic and selfless, letting the grand phrases roll. His distinction is not to have made this opera his own but to have devoted himself, wholly, to this opera, and thereby to have entered into its strange spirit. Messiaen, interestingly, suggested Moussorgsky's Boris and Debussy's Golaud as kindred roles to his St. Francis, both these antecedents being men harried by doubt. Mr. van Dam's performance similarly projects a troubled mind, a worriedness at the edge of exhaustion and disbelief: once again, we're meeting someone who is not a saint but the stand-in for a saint. (Messiaen's choice of a low baritone voice is already anti-historical: the real St. Francis apparently had a light voice, though he did indeed sing in French.)

The other heroes of the production were Ms. Upshaw and the orchestra, the latter fulfilling all the score's demands for beauty, oddity, and supreme fullness of sound, while Mr. Salonen maintained an extraordinary clarity of rhythm from players disposed over a large area. The young-voiced Arnold Schoenberg Choir also made a strong effect, though it didn't seem to be placed to best advantage: a large wooden construction, visually balancing the light box a little and evoking a semi-built cathedral, was barely used, and when it was, at the climactic end, it didn't thrust the choral sound forward, as one had hoped. Smaller parts were excellently done. Ronald Hamilton was the Leper, spitting blood in his long vituperation. Two other tenors, Thomas Young and John Aler, were caustic and consolatory. The young baritone Urban Malmberg offered a beautiful performance as Brother Leo, well serving and well served by Mr. Sellars' extension of the role, so that the relationship between master and pupil, in an opera generally lacking human connections, became a strand of warmth and affection. Here was a becoming obeisance to a composer who was himself revered and loved as a teacher.

ONE of Messiaen's first students, Pierre Boulez, was also in Salzburg last month, to present a self-portrait in miniature, conducting the Ensemble InterContemporain and the Vienna Philharmonic in works of his

own and in music that has always been close to him: Debussy, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Webern, Messiaen. Hearing his "Répons"—for six soloists, electronics, and small orchestra—just two days after "Saint François" I was startled by how much of the teacher remained. Not only do Mr. Boulez's soloists constitute a Messiaen-style gamelan but there's the same introduction of rhythmic irregularities to jolt a stable pulse, and the piece also has Messiaen's way of repeatedly summoning different harmonies to reilluminate the same note.

"Répons" was initiated, at the beginning of the nineteen-eighties, partly as a demonstration of what could be achieved with the techniques of digital sound-processing developed during the exciting early days of Mr. Boulez's Paris research laboratory, the Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique, and I'm still not sure that it quite exceeds its brief as an exhibition piece. The electronic manipulation produces marvellous effects of echo and recoloring, so that the sounds of the percussion soloists jangle together, or else spiral individually upward, as if in high conical halls of mirrors. But it all seems a bit decorative, while the energy of the work wants to burst out from the orchestra, placed in the middle of the space, with the soloists around the walls. The sense of strain in this orchestral music, forcing disparate instruments to travel the same pathways together, is urgent and compelling, and also sadly futile.

To my surprise, "Dialogue de l'Ombre Double," Mr. Boulez's second IRCAM piece, came across as altogether more rooted and solid, though on previous occasions it has appeared a dry essay. Maybe it was the sound system, brought from Paris to the Lehrbauhof, near Salzburg. Maybe it was the playing of the clarinetist Alain Damiens, who looped and purred through this interview with the imaginary other, the "double shadow" of his own recorded playing (another Messiaen-like feature, here, in the conception of dialogue as blank alternation). Maybe it was that the piece—in its perpetual inventiveness, but also in its melancholy, its entrapment—appeared to be saying something about Mr. Boulez's creative condition.

The prominence given at this Salzburg Festival to new music, unthinkable in the days when Karajan was

king, was one quick symptom of change introduced by the new regime, headed by Gérard Mortier. Another was the engagement of several of the most questioning and imaginative opera directors currently at work: Mr. Seilers, Luc Bondy (for "Salome," a production due for Chicago in 1996), Klaus Michael Grüber (for Janáček's "From the House of the Dead"). The "Salome," which I couldn't see, I hope to be reporting on from Brussels later this year; by all accounts it was magnificent. The production of Janáček's last opera was not so satisfactory. From Claudio Abbado, this was an orchestral performance of surprising irresolution, and Mr. Grüber's abstracted clownscapes were jarringly askew, as if not in touch with the passionate individualities paraded in the opera. "In every creature a spark of God" was Janáček's message on the score's title page; in Salzburg the sparks were flying only in the leading vocal performances, especially those by Philip Langridge, Monte Pederson, and Elzbieta Szmytka.

Ms. Szmytka was also winning as the chirpy soubrette servant girl of Mozart's teen-age comedy "La Finta Giardiniera," which Mr. Mortier had brought to the festival from his old home, the Théâtre de la Monnaie, in Brussels, where he had been director for a decade. Karl-Ernst Herrmann's stage pictures are bewitching: stands of thin poplars disappearing into mist, and characters in almost black-and-white costumes, so that the piece has the look of old photographs. But the directing, by Mr. Herrmann and his wife, Ursel, has become too busy and audience-flattering, and the problems of the opera—which consist of finding some rationale for a play of emotions involving one ludicrous character (Belfiore), and a nightmare shift of tone—weren't addressed. Happily, there were some good singers: Ms. Szmytka, Anne Sofie von Otter (adding another, in Ramiro, to her commanding line of Mozart cross-dressers), Laurence Dale (likable, though stuck with the exaggerated foolishness this production brings to Belfiore), Dale Duesing (a strong Nardo, especially in the wonderful aria that parodies the love manners of different European nations). "La Finta Giardiniera" was one of the glories of Mr. Mortier's time in Brussels; "Saint François d'Assise" points to more on the larger scale of Salzburg.

—PAUL GRIFFITHS

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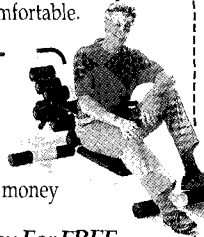
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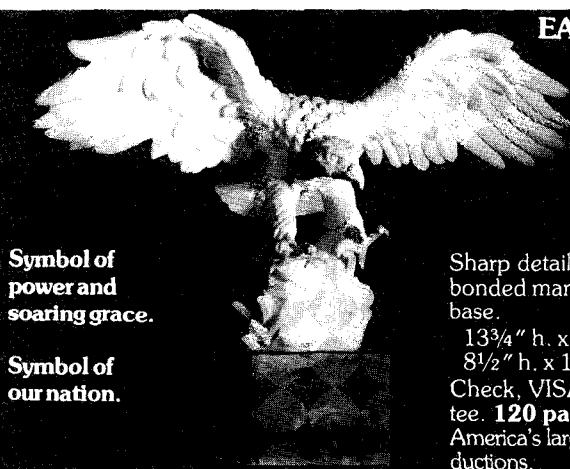
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RAGING BULLS

The Brahma bull's the one to fear,
Great to watch—but not too near!
Never know what the bull will do—
His next target might be you!

—Clifford P. Westemeier,
in *"Man, Beast, Dust."*

WACEY CATHEY, of Big Springs, Texas, drove to Cheyenne, Wyoming, late in July to ride bulls. His goal was to straddle the back of the rankest bull at the Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo for a full eight seconds, and to stay there with more grace, poise, and authority than anybody else. Whoever rides the most ferocious bull with the most skill in the final go-round, after all the lesser riders and the easy bulls have been eliminated, leaves town with about ten thousand dollars, an ornate gold belt buckle that declares him Cheyenne's best bull rider, and the glory of winning the world's biggest outdoor rodeo, now in its ninety-sixth year and known as the Daddy of 'Em All.

Riding a wild bull is not like riding a wild horse. Bulls are fighters; most Brahman or Brahman crosses, which make up the bulk of rodeo's bovine rough stock, attack things that bother them. They use their horns to gore their quarry, and they swing their heavy heads like cudgels. They weigh about a ton, but they are nimble: they can spin, twist, reverse, and jump six feet in the air. The mean ones simply do not like people, and they especially do not like people sitting on their back and punching spurs into their hide. To mount one of these creatures and try to stay on top of it for eight seconds as it tries with all its might to heave you off and then gore you or fling you aside or crush your chest or kick a hole in your skull is a challenge more dangerous than any other in professional sport. Most bull riders are delighted to tell you that bull riding is a kamikaze game, and that you have to be at least a little crazy to do it. That's what makes it the most popular event in modern rodeo.

Bulls are assigned to riders in a random draw, and, because the judges base half their score on how lustily the



bull bucks, top cowboys come to a rodeo hoping they will draw what is known as a rank bull—or, as some put it, a money bull. A rank bull is where the gold and the glory are; no one in the grandstands has paid to see somebody lope around the arena on a used-up butthead that has lost his bounce. The bull Wacey Cathey drew to ride on the fifth day at Cheyenne was named Slammer—a money bull for sure, every bit as dangerous as Dust Devil, Cement Mixer, Stir Crazy, Bullet Proof, or any of the other bellowing, angry-eyed creatures who stood in the narrow chutes waiting for their eight-second opportunity to humiliate and destroy a man.

Wacey Cathey's earnings as a bull rider in 1992 put him among the top fifteen rodeo cowboys in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (P.R.C.A.), a national organization that sanctions rodeos and establishes the relative standings of the participants. He has been riding bulls for a living since 1974, and has qualified for the yearly National Finals Rodeo fourteen times—more than any other bull rider. At thirty-nine, he is one of the oldest men in the sport. That day in Cheyenne, dressed in bright-green

leather chaps with long iridescent fringe, and with a curvaceous-brimmed high white cowboy hat planted on his head, he made it look like business-as-usual when he climbed the rails to the top of the chute and hunkered down on the back of Slammer.

Sitting on a bull in a chute can be almost as dangerous as riding one. While some bulls take the indignity of being straddled with relative grace, there are those who use the close quarters to gain an advantage. Such a bull will wait until the rider is settled, then suddenly sway from side to side, pressing his body hard against the metal sidewall rails and crushing the legs of the rider. Or he lowers his head and leaps forward, smashing the rider into the chute's front rails. Or he can rear up, hoping to force the rider to slither backward into the muck, where he is at the mercy of the bull's hooves.

Slammer was standing calmly enough. Cathey had ample opportunity to secure and check the rope rigging that was wrapped around the bull's thick midsection, just behind the hump, and would provide a handle for him during his ride. A bull rider has no stirrups and no bridle, and there is no saddle to sit on. Other than spurs with movable, blunted rowels, the rope rigging is all the equipment a man has for handling the ton of flesh he hopes to stay on. The rigging is flat and braided, with a big metal bell that dangles down between the bull's legs, clanging as soon as the animal begins to move. The sound is meant to hector the bull and make him kick harder, and the bell also acts as a weight that pulls the rigging away from the bull's body once the rider has been evicted from his back. Each cowboy has his own rigging, and you can tell a seasoned rider by the look of his bell: it will probably have been crushed as flat as if it had been steamrollered. The rules specify that a rider can hold on to his rigging with one hand only, while the other stays high in the air. He can try to grip the sides of the bull with his knees and thighs, and dig in with his spurs, but once the chute door

opens, the broad back of a twirling, vaulting bull is not easy to stay on. Around the bull's waist, a few inches in front of his scrotum, the chute men wrap a thick leather band padded with sheepskin, known as a flank strap. Just before the ride, the flank strap is tightened hard enough to irritate the bull and make him kick high and urgently in an attempt to shake the strap loose. In some rodeos, an electric cattle prod is used as soon as the chute door is opened, giving the bull a shock on his rump or his testicles to increase his rage.

Wacey Cathey adjusted his grip on his rigging. In order to maximize his chance of holding on, he wrapped the rope around his right hand to create a secure hitch. He balled his left hand into a fist and punched the knotting to make the connection even tighter, insuring that there would be no slippage whatever, and then pulled his hat low on his head and gripped the top of the chute with his left hand for balance. He nodded—a signal for the men outside to pull back the gate, quickly opening the door of the chute that led into the dirt arena. Slammer blew out of there four or five feet in the air, Cathey holding tight.

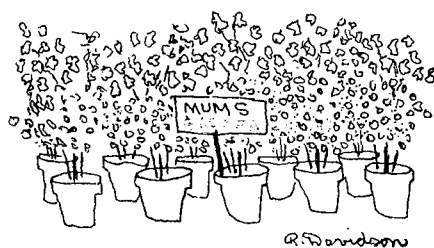
On the back of a bucking bull, eight seconds can seem to stretch toward forever—each instant crowded with jolts, blows, dips, switchbacks, and paralyzing alarm—or eight seconds can evaporate. Many cowboys, both pros and beginners, say they have no memory of their rides at all, and emerge from their amnesiac state only when they hit the dirt of the arena. The way they explain it, there is simply no chance to think once the chute opens; fear and excitement generate such an overwhelming charge of adrenaline that all you feel is the raw thrill of the ride, and all you are capable of doing is obeying your instincts, which by the time you mount a rank rodeo bull had better be well honed. Whirling off the ground with your spurs screwed into the ribs of a beast ten times your size, your knuckles white around the rigging, your free arm swinging in the air like a windshield wiper gone berserk, you find that your life has become very uncomplicated. It has been winnowed down to two things: hanging on and surviving.

Later that afternoon, Cheyenne's Memorial Hospital described Wacey Cathey's injuries as a bruised lung, three or four broken ribs, a concussion,

breathing problems, and a re-broken left arm. He had only just decided to stop wearing the removable arm cast his doctor had designed for bull riding; and the ribs on his other side still had cracks from a bull wreck earlier in the year. About a mile from the arena where Slammer had stomped him, Cathey lay in a darkened hospital room with a fruit basket, sent by an admirer and still wrapped in plastic, on a table next to his bedpan. The hospital bed was raised at the head, and a pillow cradled his swollen face. The bruised lung made it hard for him to talk, and he winced when he tried to adjust his position. Cathey had no idea what had happened aboard Slammer. "I remember getting on, pulling my rope, and nodding my head," he whispered. "But, after that, nothing." Anyone in the stands could have filled him in. Almost immediately, Slammer bucked him off to the side, spun around, and kicked him hard, propelling him unconscious into the dirt.

Wacey Cathey was lucky. Three years ago, on a rainy Saturday in Cheyenne, Lane Frost, who was twenty-five years old and had been the bull-riding champion of the world in 1987, successfully completed an eight-second engagement on a notorious wide-horned red brindle named Bad to the Bone, then let himself get bucked off. But Lane Frost didn't get up and run away fast enough. Bad to the Bone turned around and drove him into the ground with a horn, crushing his chest. Frost lurched to his feet and waved for help, then fell dead.

WHY does a man put himself on the back of an immense animal that appears to find satisfaction in smashing passengers like bugs? All other official rodeo events—roping, saddle-bronc and bareback riding, steer wrestling, barrel racing (and, for one weird year, 1944, wild-cow milking)—have some precedent in frontier or ranch life; they display talents that cowboys need, or once needed, to do their job. But in the earliest, informal

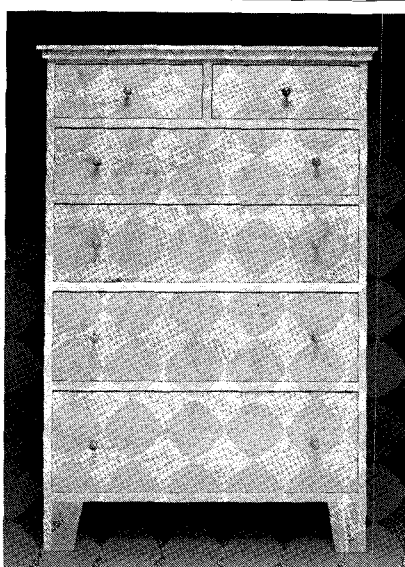


rodeos, which took place at the end of trail drives in the eighteen-seventies, and in the Wild West Shows that Buffalo Bill began producing in 1883, demonstrations of fundamental cowboy talents were frequently supplemented by novelty acts with no purpose other than to thrill a crowd: Roman riding (standing on a team of two galloping horses), bison riding, steer jumping. Bull riding is the culmination of this kind of perilous and useless fun—no good whatever on a working ranch, but nonetheless maintaining a tradition of frontier danger and cowboy pluck.

One reason people like to watch bull riding is that it is *not* a workaday wrangler's job. It is organized daredevilry, and its heroes are rodeo's top guns. Bull riders are famous for cultivating their bravado. Although they may dress and speak like John Wayne, their aura is that of star athletes, rather than of cow-pie-hopping ranch hands, and they can mesmerize a crowd the way Michael Jordan does. They travel light, unburdened by cumbersome tools of the cattleman's trade. Whereas a bronc rider has to lug around his saddle, and ropers need to take their trained quarter horses with them, all that a bull rider requires is his rope rigging, bell, and spurs, plus courage and a high tolerance for pain.

Bull riding resembles such sports as bungee jumping and skydiving in that adrenaline is its kick; and it is like surfing and mountain climbing in the way it pits a human being against a force of nature. In the case of bull riding, though, the force of nature is not an inert rock or an indifferent wave: it is a sentient beast that can turn around and come after you in anger. Nor does bull riding have much in common with Spanish bullfighting, a balletic *danse macabre* in which costumed teams of swordsmen on horseback weaken the bull before the matador steps in to pierce it through the heart: the point of bull riding is not to kill the bull, or even to conquer it, but to endure its fury by performing an exhilarating kind of man-beast jitterbug.

Although plenty of technique is required to stay on the back of an unruly bull, bull riding is in a sense the most basic of all rodeo sports: the bull bucks like crazy, and the rider tries to hold tight. It's as simple as that. If the rider doesn't last the full eight seconds, he gets no score, and even if



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he does go the distance the judging is subjective: Each of two judges awards a maximum of twenty-five points to the bull and twenty-five to the rider, making a total of a hundred points for a perfect ride. The bull's score is based on how fast he spins, how mercilessly he kicks, how high he jumps, how suddenly he lunges, how hard he drops, and how cleverly he fades sidewise. The rider gets points for aggressiveness (spurring a bull in the neck is worth more than spurring him behind the shoulder), control, and ability to stay perched high and proud on the middle of the animal's back. In all bull-riding history, there has been only one hundred-point ride—that of Wade Leslie on Growney's Wolfman Skoal, in Central Point, Oregon, in 1991. Any score in the eighties is excellent, and is likely to win money.

No one knows who first decided to climb aboard a full-grown bull and try to stay there—probably some hellbent cowpoke with time on his hands or with an urgent death wish or a desire to show off—but organized steer riding began in 1913, when it was introduced as a competitive event in the Prescott, Arizona, rodeo (now the world's oldest, having begun in 1888), and that first event was won by the movie star Tom Mix. Prescott reported its first fatality in 1922, when a steer lunged to the ground and fractured the skull of a cowboy named Frank Stephens. Heavier Hereford bulls began to be used instead of steers in 1925; then Brahman, which were more violent, were introduced; and by the mid-nineteen-thirties Brahma-bull riding had become a regular part of the show at rodeos from Pendleton, Oregon, to Madison Square Garden.

Bull riding's unique drawing power comes mostly from the image of the bulls themselves. Unlike wild horses, which are frequently romanticized in books, movies, and art for their unbroken spirit, bulls traditionally are demonized as red-eyed killers—"wild and vicious human-haters... among the meanest, most contemptible, rankest and most easily riled animals on earth," according to the nineteen-thirties rodeo champ Cecil Cornish in his book "Mr. Rodeo, Himself." The historian Clifford P. Westermeier, in "Man, Beast, Dust," his seminal study of rodeo, writes that bull riding offers

double the danger of any other rodeo sport, because "one half of the performing element is a murderous beast." Westermeier points out that for audiences part of the thrill is "the ever-present feeling that the beast is conscious of the crowd and would attack if possible," and says that this feeling "pervades the spectators and either gives them a sensation of being akin to the daring cowboys, a sense of fearlessness and bravery, or a fascination created by the sheer danger and horror of what could happen if the beast were to get among the crowds." He recalls an incident at the 1937 Fort Worth rodeo, in which a bucking bull somehow escaped from the arena into the city streets, where he terrorized pedestrians. Police shot the bull more than forty times, Westermeier says, but after forty slugs the beast was still alive; the bull didn't die until his throat was cut.

"Sometimes I think they could just put a bull out there in the arena without a rider, and it would get more interest than the best steer roper in the world," lamented a young contestant at Cheyenne Frontier Days whose belt buckle, featuring a golden steer head with fierce ruby eyes, announced him to be a champion roper. Roping is an event that real cowboys find fascinating, but it seems prosaic to most spectators. In fact, the popularity of bulls has spawned a rash of monomaniacal contests around the country with such names as Bullnanza, Super Bull, Megabull, Bull-o-Rama, Bull Frenzy, and Bullmania, in which all other rodeo

events have been eliminated in favor of the pure excitement of seeing one determined rider after another try to endure the heat of what some hands like to call "one big snortin' chunk o' chili."



Many people find bull riding the easiest rodeo sport to watch, because it doesn't involve any obvious animal abuse. The way it looks from the distant grandstands or on a TV broadcast, the odds favor the bull, and, sure enough, the bull almost always trots out of the arena apparently unharmed by either the rider or the rodeo clowns, whose job it is to distract him from going after the fallen cowboy. In this respect, it appears to be different from such events as calf roping, in which contestants lasso and topple a running dogie and tie it up; steer

wrestling, in which a man leaps off a horse onto the back of a fleeing steer and twists its head like a corkscrew until he wrenches the steer onto its back; and steer roping, in which steers are yanked off their feet with a lasso and dragged through the dirt. In these sports, animals get hurt, and it is common at rodeos to see injured livestock carted off to be destroyed. The sight of a wounded calf or steer being hauled away at the end of a rope severely tests modern rodeo's image as wholesome, happy family entertainment. In bull riding, on the other hand, spectators are encouraged to fear, rather than pity, the animals, and although men get injured all the time, their disasters only make the sport more exciting, and their willingness to take a beating earns them respect and admiration. "He can't walk through an airport metal detector" is a complimentary remark frequently made about retired bull-riding champions, who have had any number of broken bones and damaged joints surgically repaired with steel parts.

For many small-town Western boys, bull riding is a unique opportunity to be a winner and a hero, the way boxing is for some big-city kids. The odds are against you, but the honor of competing, even if you wind up face down in the dirt with a hoofprint on your back, gives you a charisma that goes beyond whatever cash you win. Compared with other superstars, and certainly compared with the superstar participants in any of the sports on network television, rodeo's heroes do not make a lot of money. Last year's bull-riding champ, Tuff Hedeman, of Bowie, Texas, also ranked No. 1 in rodeo earnings, with a total income of \$111,071. Wacey Cathey was tenth, with \$64,954. These amounts are hardly enough to keep the likes of Bo Jackson in shoe-laces, but to boys who come out of Porcupine, South Dakota, or Flower Mound, Texas, or towns with names like Chickasha or Medicine Lodge or Muleshoe or Blackfoot, rodeo paydays are attractive, and the buckle the boys hope to win signifies the best kind of celebrity.

Those who ride to victory can become living legends—as Lane Frost did the year before his death. Seven times in 1988, he rode a bull named Red Rock, who was as rank as any

creature gets—never once having been ridden for a full eight seconds. But Frost, who was known for unparalleled riding finesse, and also for the jaunty feather he stuck in the brim of his wide Oklahoma cowboy hat and for his boyish good looks, managed to go the distance four out of the seven times. Frost's season-long duel with Red Rock transfixed crowds and made him a role model for hundreds of bull riders in Little Britches rodeos and high-school contests. Frost has now become the James Dean of the sport:



a young idol cut down in his prime. He is the subject of a tribute song, "A Smile Like That," written and performed by a rodeo announcer named Randy Schmutz, and also of a limited-edition memorial bronze sculpture (of him aboard a bucking Brahman) on a rotating walnut base, titled "Champion," by Chris Navarro, a Wyoming artist. It's said that Luke Perry, of "Beverly Hills 90210," is interested in playing Frost in a movie now being written about him.

Rodeo champions are the gods of their world because they are living reminders of the Western heritage. They are more independent than any other kind of athlete, and they (and their fans) enjoy thinking of the way they live as a modern-day version of the lives of their frontier forebears. Rodeo has no teams, no agents, and no contracts. Each contestant is his own boss and makes his own decision about which of more than seven hundred pro rodeos he wants to try his hand at next. No one pays him to compete; on the contrary, he pays to enter, and when he does so he knows there is a good chance he will walk away with nothing more than new bruises and maybe a sympathetic slap on the back from a pal. Except for the National Finals Rodeo, in Las Vegas in December, at which the total purse, for a hundred and twenty competitors, is over two and a half million dollars, and for a few dozen other rich events, like Cheyenne Frontier Days, from which a winner can take home thousands, most rodeos' top prizes are in the hundreds of dollars, and nine out of ten men who enter get absolutely nothing. While a few of the top cowboys might pull down a hundred thousand dollars or more in a year, most men on the circuit consider themselves

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to be doing pretty well if they top ten thousand, out of which they pay the expenses of driving to three or four rodeos per week all year long.

Nearly every hockshop west of the Mississippi has a good inventory of winners' buckles that their owners pawned to buy the gas to drive to Belle Fourche or Vernal or Prairie du Chien and try to win some money. Even top riders need to stay on the road constantly, because in pro rodeo the yearly standings are based on how much you make. And the only way to make enough to get to the lucrative Finals (reserved for the top fifteen money-makers in each event) is to rodeo nearly all the time, and to win—or, at least, place. A handful of rough-stock superstars occasionally fly to major events, but nearly everyone else gets from town to town on the highways, at night, at high speed, with a bag of fast food on the seat beside him and the radio blasting to keep him awake. Toward the last day of almost every rodeo, in whichever local saloon has been anointed the rodeo hands' favorite, gypsy cowboys whose cars have broken down somewhere back along the circuit, or who simply trust to luck to keep them going, circle the bar and the tables hoping to hitch a

ride on down the road. Some of the older contestants travel in campers, with their wives and babies, but most bull and bronc riders who are in their twenties buddy up to share expenses and split the driving chores. "In the rodeo business, you've got to learn to sleep quick," one veteran competitor said, and, with equal measures of romance and lament, he described the rapture of chasing thousands of miles across the West in a rattletrap sedan, hoping for enough time to get a shower and a cup of coffee before he climbed into the chute; of feeling the body heat radiating off the bull as he lowered himself and gripped his rigging, praying to God he would last eight seconds; and, finally, of winning the world. In rodeo, winning the world means becoming a world champion, and you do it by earning more money that year than anybody else in your event.

IN 1970, Gary Leffew won the world. Now he teaches others how to do it, at the Gary Leffew Bull Riding School. School is not where most bull riders learn their trade. Some pick it up as youngsters on a farm or ranch, by sneaking onto cattle when their fathers aren't looking, or, in town, by

tethering a swinging barrel in the air between back-yard trees. But, for competitors who want an edge, school can be the place to get it. Gary Leffew has a reputation for turning neophytes into contenders, and ranked riders into champions; his alumni include Ted Nuce, the top bull rider of 1986, and dozens of men who have made it to the Finals in the last twenty years.

Leffew himself placed among the top fifteen riders seven times, starting in 1966, and in his championship year he performed the astonishing feat of going eight seconds on nine out of the ten bulls he drew in the Finals. Now forty-seven and retired from rough-stock events, he holds five week-long clinics a year at his ranch, in the town of Nipomo, California, fifty miles north of Santa Barbara, and others at various ranches around the West. When he isn't teaching the fine points of posting, arching, gripping, and mental conditioning, he makes his living by lending his name, face, and reputation to TV and print advertisements for such products as Bull's-Eye barbecue sauce, Tony Lama boots, Coca-Cola, Busch beer, Nissan trucks, and Right Guard deodorant. Another source of income is an enormous bull he once rode, which a taxidermist has immortalized in a

dramatic pose, with his hind legs kicking high in the air, and which Leffew transports around the country to fairs and rodeos: for a small fee, you can climb on the bull's back, grip the rigging, wave your free hand in the air, and have your picture taken.

Thirty-eight aspiring bull riders signed up for school at Leffew's ranch in Nipomo this past May. Each of them paid three hundred dollars tuition, plus half the cost of a room—shared with a fellow-student—at a nearby motel. Most of them travelled at least two hundred miles; one came from New York State, and one from Australia. A few brought their wives; five or six, too young to drive, were chaperoned by parents. Except for two Native American sisters, who spat tobacco juice on the ground at regular intervals, all the aspirants were male. Some had ridden bulls before, in high school or in regional rodeos, but there were at least half a dozen who had never seen a bull in person.

Every day, before any bulls are brought out, Gary Leffew implants a positive mental attitude in his pupils. This process takes place at 9 A.M. in an outdoor lecture area. Instead of a podium, there is an empty metal heating-oil drum, suspended in such a way that men on either side can grab long wooden handles and make it tilt and pivot. The oil drum represents the thick midsection of the bull. Students can climb on it and practice their leg locks and arm swings, and the teacher can analyze what they are doing. It is from this lofty perch that Gary Leffew, straddling the swinging can, holds forth each day for almost an hour; and it would be fair to say that, whatever his talents as a bull rider were, they could hardly have surpassed his talents as a teacher. His morning lessons combine technical instruction with a rousing pep talk about overcoming odds and the joy of winning. Spiced with tales of his own days on the rodeo circuit, the lectures build to a whooping intensity that makes him sound like a Bible Belt preacher for whom riding rank bulls is a sure way to Heaven.

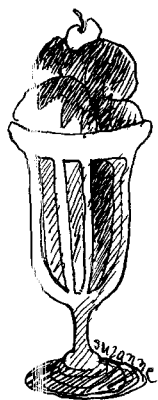
Like many bull riders, Gary Leffew is a small man with a big ego. "A hundred and forty-five pounds of twisted

steel and sex appeal" is how, with a grin, he describes himself to the class, and it is an accurate description. He is cowboy handsome, bronzed from years of outdoor living, and saved from prettiness by the kind of well-placed crow's feet and laugh lines that have helped make Clint Eastwood a movie star. He dresses in skintight Wranglers and a chest-hugging T-shirt that shows off his pumped muscles and lean lines. On his head he wears a four-hundred-dollar black 20X-beaver Resistol hat; his feet are encased in sharp-toed boots made of the hide of some endangered creature; and he looks out at his students from behind a pair of aviator shades with amber lenses.

What the students come to hear is the story of how Gary Leffew rose from being a nobody to win the world. For two decades, he has been telling his tale, using himself as the best example of how anyone with some talent and the right mental attitude can be a success. He recalls his humble beginnings, in the mid-sixties: newly married and with a pregnant wife, he had quit his job painting missile gantries to rodeo full time, and had found himself being bucked off everything he tried to ride. His luck changed, however, when he met up with a fellow bull rider who had found the secret of success. This cowboy had suffered through his own slump not long before and was now walking

away with all the money. He said he owed his change of fortune to a hypnotist in Dallas who periodically reprogrammed his mind in such a way that he automatically made all the right moves when he got on a bull. That cowboy's winning streak ended when he got rowdy and smacked his Svengali in the face with a rare steak at a fancy Dallas restaurant. But Leffew soon discovered that the hypnotist

had derived his techniques from a book—"Psycho-Cybernetics," a self-help manual, by Maxwell Maltz, that instructed readers how to use mental conditioning to transform themselves from losers into winners. Leffew got a copy and devoured every page. He went into seclusion, during which he spent all his time imagining himself riding the rankest bulls with the utmost authority. After two months of



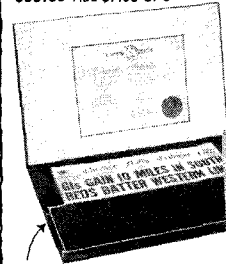
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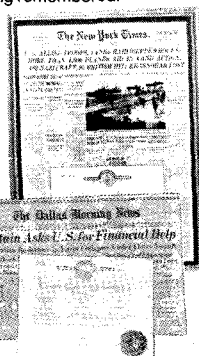
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resolutely thinking like a winner, Leffew declared himself a walking, talking bull-riding machine. He came out of his retreat and executed an eighty-nine-point ride on a whirling bull at the Denver rodeo. "It worked!" Leffew exulted. And from nowhere in the standings in 1967 he rose to No. 2 in 1968.

In 1970, after winning the world, Leffew teamed up with Don Gay, a young bull rider fresh out of high school, who made Leffew his mentor. Leffew and Gay rampaged across the country in 1972, finishing fourth and eighth in the bull-riding standings and infuriating other cowboys with their mental-conditioning antics and post-Aquarian psychobabble. ("Mental, my rear," one veteran says, recalling their pre-ride mumbo-jumbo.) They were so possessed, Leffew recalls, that even when they drew a dink (a bull known for low scores) they somehow

managed to infuse their zeal into it and spur it on to historic rides. They lived, ate, and breathed bulls. "You get high on that adrenaline," he tells his enraptured students. "You are high for days. I mean, you are hooked on it." He and Gay developed a low-comedy routine to mark their arrival in the ready area of a rodeo, adjacent to the chutes. "I see the bulls!" Leffew would call out in a resounding voice, like a Baptist preacher, and Gay, who grew up in Mesquite, Texas, would call back, "Aw, tell us about it!" And whenever the chute door opened on a bull rider the two of them would go into a call-and-response description of the ride ("Bull a-turnin'," "Spurs a-flashin'") that drove a lot of cowboys nuts but put Leffew and Gay in a fine frame of mind for winning. "We'd be so pumped we'd walk into that old rodeo just a-beboppin'," Leffew recalls. "And whatever we drew we bucked with it. I'll tell you what: we kicked butt all summer long."

By this point in his sermon, Leffew's new students are misty-eyed with the joy of rodeoing, imagining what bliss it must be to be Gary Leffew, savoring the taste of victory he has given them—perhaps even picturing themselves starring in a buddy movie, playing Gary or Donny in that magnificent summer of '72. Now it is time for them to ride a bull. Most of the bull-riding students have brought chaps, spurs, and rope

rigging with them, and also sheepskin knee pads to wear under their jeans. Nearly everybody wears a cowboy hat and boots. Some students look more likely born to ride than others. Zane Page, a tough, wiry twenty-four-year-old, has been to other bull-riding schools, and he rodeos in his spare time, when he isn't working as a long-haul truck driver; he doesn't expect to win the world, but for him a few days of riding bulls in the company of an hombre like Gary Leffew is a little piece of paradise on earth. Jason Pluhar, on the other hand, is a novice, and he looks a little nervous. He is seventeen, with a chubby pink face, and he seems to puff from the exertion it takes to walk from the lecture area to the arena.



In twenty years of teaching people to ride bulls, Gary Leffew has seen some awfully sorry-looking wannabes. Nobody enrolled for this session is quite as memorable as Foam Man, a student whose real name is lost in time but whose story is one of Leffew's favorites. Foam Man showed up a few years back wearing his own version of a bull-riding safety suit. He had gone to a Western store and bought regulation jeans and a cowboy shirt, but bought them eight sizes too large. He put on the clothes, stuffed all the spare space with yards of foam rubber, and arrived at the arena looking like the Michelin Man. Leffew recalls that after Foam Man was bucked off his first bull he bounced like a Super Ball, then came down right on the top of his unprotected head. Foam Man did not return.

Michael Battles is about as green as a student gets. He has never been near a bull, and recalls that the only four-legged animal he has ever ridden was a pony; he was in the third grade, and a teen-ager pulled the little animal along with a rope. Battles has just graduated from West Point, and a week at the Gary Leffew Bull Riding School was a present from his father. He has owned a Harley-Davidson, and after his summer vacation he is to join the Army's elite Rangers, but he can't imagine anything that could be quite as thrilling as riding a bull. "I would have paid three hundred dollars just to sit on the fence with these cowboys!" he exclaims, staring, enraptured, at the leathery-faced professional wranglers who are sitting above

the bull chutes nearby. "This is a whole other life. The great thing about these cowboys is that they are all for one, one for all. I tell you, bull riders are the best, and Gary is the best bull rider. I mean, it's like if a guy out there is hurt, I would lay my life down to help him, and I know he would do it for me." When Michael was asked how long he had known Gary and the other men at the bull-riding school, he estimated that it was probably about three hours.

Shane Saulsbury was driven to school by his stepmother from their home, near San Luis Obispo. He is fifteen and a real rodeo fan, who relishes the cowboy life and spends whatever time he can around the chutes with the pros. He tries to live his life as true to cowboy ways as possible, and, as he sees it, that involves eating as much meat as he can. "I guess I eat beef five times a week for dinner," he says, adding, "If you don't have beef in your diet, your heart will stop pumping." Saulsbury has made quick friends with Juan Holsbo, a shy, thin eighteen-year-old part-Diegueño Indian who lives on a reservation near San Diego. When Holsbo is asked why he came to rodeo school, he says, with no evident irony, "My heroes have always been cowboys."

Barry Baker is twenty-three, a lanky, tan blond from Huntington Beach, California, and for the last nine years he has been a trophy-winning surfer. Recently, he grew weary of surfing, partly because of ocean pollution and partly because he came to feel that bull riding might afford a better kind of kick. He has already ridden a few bulls in amateur rodeos, and believes that the balance it takes to ride a gnarly wave is hardly different from the skill required to stay on a bucking bull. "You have to flow with the wave for surfing. Here you have to flow with the bull," he says. Baker's outfit is half cowboy, half beach boy: psychedelic T-shirt, cowboy boots that have been secured at the ankles with little leather straps, and well-worn jeans, under which is a girdlelike pair of neoprene scuba pants for added protection.

Michael (Doc) Yager is a returning student. He is forty-six years old and is a physician's surgical assistant from Albany, New York. Doc rodeos in the First Frontier Circuit, which includes the entire Northeast, from Virginia to Maine, and which is notable for hav-

ing never produced a national champion. Doc is a dude, and though a hurt wrist prevents him from mounting many bulls, he makes a glorious sight in custom-made chaps with flowing purple metallic fringe, and with leather gloves tucked into the waist; his shirt is a red-striped Wrangler Brush Popper, and he wears a tall white hat and has a custom-made rigging rope slung over his shoulder.

When it is time to ride, students hustle toward the arena—a dirt circle enclosed by a tall wooden fence. There is an announcer's booth set high enough for Gary to see all the action and videotape every ride for instant replay. From the booth, he calls instructions to his crew above the din of a country-music radio station playing over loudspeakers. There are bull chutes at opposite ends of the arena, and behind the chutes are holding pens for more cattle. Students and wranglers perch on top of the fence to watch the action—railbirds.

Today, Gary Leffew's fifteen-year-old daughter, Tyree, and five of her friends have claimed a part of the fence for themselves. Tyree is a pretty California blonde in tight jeans and a sleeveless top. Her friends are dressed the same way, and together they watch her father's students struggle to ride bulls, viewing the spectacle with giggles, eye rolls, and blasé disdain of the kind that can be more painful to the young male ego than a bull's horn in the groin. Midway through the day's training, during a break when there are no bulls in the arena, Tyree and her posse climb down from the fence and walk single file, like ducklings, straight through the center of the arena, swinging their hair in a syncopated beat.

The bulls to be ridden are not drawn at random but are chosen by Leffew and his twenty-four-year-old son, Brett, to match the riders' abilities, to instill confidence, and to rectify weaknesses. Rank bulls, for experienced students,

are let out of chutes to the left of the announcer's booth; tamer ones buck from chutes to the right. Of all the bulls at the school, the fattest, named Tiny, is also the gentlest. Low, wide, and black, Tiny weighs fifteen hundred pounds. He is ten years old and is especially suitable for first-timers. Some of the experienced ranch hands like to jump three at a time on Tiny's back, or ride him backward; others kiss him between the ears to show how mild he is. Tiny stands calmly in the chute and bucks softly; sometimes he needs to hear the sound of the electric prod to keep him kicking for the whole eight seconds.

In addition to videotaping the action, Gary Leffew cheers riders on from his booth, using the colorful jargon of pro rodeo announcers. Sometimes, to break the tension or the monotony, he grows irreverent—especially when a very young or very bad rider goes out on a plodding old side of beef like Tiny and cannot stay aboard for eight seconds. "Hall of Fame ride!" Leffew calls out as a novice tilts sideways and tries desperately to hold on. "One for the record books!" he cries as a rider loses his grip on the rigging and falls face first into the dirt. "Ninety points for sure! He's got the spectators on their feet!" The railbirds guffaw, Tiny lopes away, and the fallen rider spits dirt from his mouth as he struggles to his feet, perhaps considering a career in auto sales.

All the instant-replay critiques contain similar advice, because, although there are a thousand ways to be bucked off a bull, there is only one way to stay on: find what Leffew calls the comfort zone, in which you feel that you are so tuned in to the bull's rhythm that you use it instead of fighting it, and the ranker the bull, the better you ride. "Come on!" he cries out, watching a cowboy do it right. "Come on! Buck! The higher you jump is just a little too low for me!" Leffew stops the tape to show a rider how he hunches forward, giving the bull an edge. "Stick your chest out more," Leffew tells the student, not only because it will improve his balance but because it will make him feel proud on top of the bull; it will make him look—and ride—like a winner. "I don't see any daylight under your seat. . . . Move your free arm right up high. . . . Get up on those legs. . . . Find your center of balance." Whatever his critique, Leffew always





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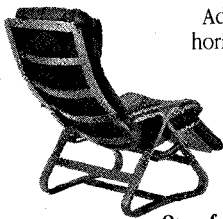
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By the middle of the second day, some of the students' early wild enthusiasm has begun to wane; bruised muscles are starting to hurt and swell, and once-spiffy cowboy outfits are torn and caked with muck. When Michael Battles was thrown by his first bull, he ripped his bluejeans from the ankle to the knee, and now he's using silver duct tape to secure the flapping fabric to his body. Doc is out of commission. Jason Pluhar comes back from a brutal ride limping with a pulled groin muscle. "Where does it hurt?" a veteran asks, and Jason whispers, "Everywhere."

RODEO can be a life of pain not only for the cowboys but for the stock. Ever since rodeo evolved from ranch to arena, more than a century ago, it has been beset by animal advocates who do not consider it a sport at all but, rather, organized abuse. In 1895, the Denver Humane Society brought the police to the Festival of Mountain and Plain to arrest a performer named Arizona Charlie when he demonstrated steer roping; steer wrestling was banned at the Calgary Stampede in 1923, because of protests not only by the Calgary Humane Society but by United States cattlemen, who didn't want their stock weakened and injured by cowboys practicing for the event. In 1926, the president of the Washington State Humane Society declared, of rodeos in general, "Complete abolition is our objective." Madison Square Garden, which from 1922 to 1983 had been home to the richest and best-attended rodeo in the country, was frequently picketed by the Humane Society of the United States; and today, the biweekly *Prorodeo Sports News*, published by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, features a regular "Animal Welfare Issues" column, most of which is devoted to alerting readers to animal-rights groups that are out to restrain them, and to pending legislation designed to oversee their sport.

No matter how rodeo is regulated

and policed, the very nature of a contest that pits man against beast will always raise concern among people who simply do not believe in using animals as entertainment. In an attempt to confront this issue, the P.R.C.A. book of rules and bylaws specifically addresses such subjects as proper feed and handling, where an electric prod can be applied, how much time animals can spend inside a truck between events, and what kinds of rigging, flank straps, and spurs are allowed. Of a total of twenty regulations regarding humane treatment of animals which are listed in the P.R.C.A. handbook, two are underlined for emphasis. They prescribe a two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar fine for anyone who "excessively abuses an animal" or is guilty of "mistreatment of livestock." But neither excessive abuse nor mistreatment is spelled out. How the rules are actually enforced is also ambiguous, since no single official is in charge of enforcement and it is left to the judges, who are busy evaluating contestants' performances, to report violations to the P.R.C.A. On the whole, the policy relies on well-intentioned self-policing: cowboys, contractors, clowns, veterinarians, and P.R.C.A. committeemen are expected to blow the whistle on their comrades if they notice an infraction.

In its efforts to polish rodeo's image and assure parents that they are not bringing their children to witness a blood sport, the P.R.C.A. has published a booklet, "Humane Facts," and produced a videotape, "Animals in Rodeo: A Closer Look," designed to contradict what it believes are misconceptions on the part of animal-rights groups and the public. Two of the issues dealt with are the flank strap and the electric prod, both of which have long been pointed to by rodeo's

foes as examples of brutality and have often been the object of local legislative efforts. Friends of Animals, Inc., has described the flank strap as producing "excruciating agony" and forcing an animal to buck, but the P.R.C.A. contends that bucking is simply natural behavior, and that the strap is little more than a minor irritant that encourages it. As for the prod, rodeo's defenders like to say that it is powered by mere flashlight batteries, and delivers no more of a jolt than you would



get if you touched a sparkplug, and also that it is considerably more humane than a whip or club.

The issue of animals' rights is an extremely sensitive one in the rodeo community; mere mention of it is enough to end conversations with cowboys on the spot, or to provoke outraged diatribes against outsiders who simply do not understand Western ways. The cowboys and stockmen of the P.R.C.A. assert that rodeo is about as good a life as a livestock animal could ever have. The way they see it, a good bronc or bull works a mere eight seconds a few times a

week. For a recalcitrant horse that would never make a proper mount, or for a truculent bull, bucking in a rodeo is the only alternative to the slaughterhouse. Rodeo boosters also argue that unless an animal is healthy it will not buck, so keeping it well fed and in good spirits is just good business. A top bucking horse or bull can cost well over ten thousand dollars, and it stands to reason that the owner will want to protect his investment for financial reasons, if not for humane ones.

The livestock brought to the Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo was lovely to see: the animals were nearly as robust and clean as the Brylcreem-coiffed cows at a 4-H show; they were housed in roomy pens with big tubs of water, salt licks, and plenty of feed; and there was hardly a scratch on them besides their brands. The bulls, who would seem so ferocious blasting out of their chutes, lay upon the cool earth chewing their cud, their eyes half closed in a look of supremely dull bovine contentment. Those near the fence didn't even mind if a passerby reached over to pat their gelatinous humps or take a closeup snapshot of their big, wet noses. By the time most bulls get to a major rodeo such as Cheyenne, they have proved their talents and are, in their own way, as much professional performers as the cowboys who try to ride them. They have been culled from their herd because they were especially high-spirited or ornery; they have been broken enough to remain relatively calm in a chute; and they have grown accustomed to a life of being trucked around the country from rodeo to rodeo, bucking when the time comes to buck, then resting in their pens between performances.



Many of the unexpectedly torpid creatures at Cheyenne belonged to Rudy E. Vela, a stock contractor from Edinburg, Texas, who began supplying bulls to rodeos in 1958. Vela specializes in Brahmans and Brahman crosses, and he explained that, strange as it seems, "gentling down" is the key to producing an animal that is consistently ferocious in the ring. "We brush them all over with our hands to get them used to people, and we teach them how to stand still when they are in the chute," he said. "That takes days. Then we walk them into the

arena and show them how to get out the gate when it's time to leave. You need patience to train a bull. You cannot take a wild animal and put it in a rodeo. The gentler you are with bulls, the higher they will buck at showtime." He defined an ideal bucking bull as one that spins and jumps like a hellion when the chute gate swings open, but trots like a gentleman back to its pen as soon as it leaves the ring.

Not all rodeo bulls, however, are lucky enough to be gentled down by Rudy Vela or another conscientious stock contractor concerned for his property's health and welfare. Although big rodeos under the control of the P.R.C.A. have a system, flawed though it may be, to make sure livestock is treated properly, there are countless amateur and unsanctioned rodeos that are in no way obliged to obey P.R.C.A. rules. The harsh treatment afforded animals in some of these makes the controversy over details like flank straps and prods seem ludicrously insignificant. At private roping clubs, where cowboys practice their skills with a lariat, steers are sometimes chased and lassoed and yanked to the ground until they keel over and die from exhaustion. One young bull rider at Cheyenne recalled his experience on bucking stock in unsanctioned rodeos in Texas: he'd witnessed chute men pressing steel burrs underneath animals' tails and sticking their testicles with pins. "Whatever it takes," he said. "The point is to get the animals in pain. They are in this little box and they cannot get out. It's no wonder they jump." Bucking animals draw crowds, and not only to rodeos. In some honky-tonks, live bulls have replaced the mechanical ones made popular by "Urban Cowboy"; and these



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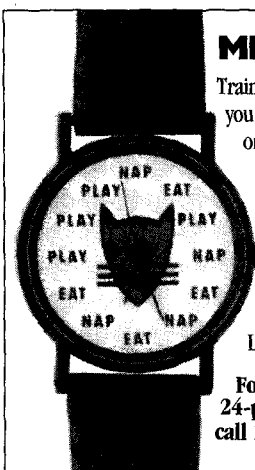
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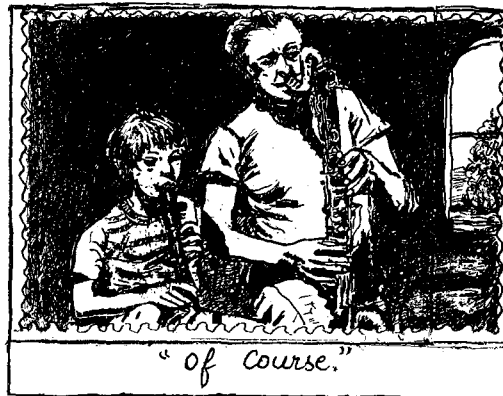
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pitiful creatures, which find themselves transported from a grassy field to a smoke-filled room rocked by people doing the Texas Two-Step, are shocked, prodded, and provoked mercilessly, then ridden until all their fight is gone, whereupon they are replaced. There are no veterinarians in attendance or on call (as there must be at a sanctioned rodeo), and there is no rule book to explain that it is unacceptable to torture an animal into bucking higher and higher. Unlike the prized bucking bulls of the pro-rodeo circuit, such animals are expendable—worth their weight as dog food once they are used up for sport.

At a bull-riding school that happened to be having a bad week last spring, one could get a taste of just how dismal a bull's life can be. The rancher who had for many years been in charge of putting the bulls in the chutes had taken ill, and was replaced by recruits who had no idea how to handle a bull fresh from the field. To complicate matters, the bulls trucked in for the occasion were five years old—too set in their ways for easy training, as big as pickup trucks, and seething with

fury at being penned for the first time in their lives. Alarmed bellowing drifted through the arena. The untrained wranglers were trying to maneuver a dozen frenzied bulls from their holding pens into the chutes by applying prods countless times to their noses, ears, eyes, and testicles. Once the bulls had been forced into the chutes—a kind of confinement they had never known—they tried to climb out. A huge humpbacked Brahman reared up and smashed his way onto the catwalk above the pen with his front hooves, sending the wranglers scurrying. He got a third of the way free, and then jumped on his back hooves, trying frantically to pull his bulk all the way out by hooking his front legs over the rails. Three men on the catwalk seemed terrified by the animal's monstrous strength. One of them hoisted a long two-by-four with nails protruding from the tip and bashed the bull on the head so hard and so many times that the board began to splinter. Stunned, and bleeding from his nose and mouth, the animal staggered and retreated.

In the pen, many of the bulls had open wounds on their backs, and the

torn flesh was clotted with flies. Some bulls appeared bruised from their first trip in a cattle truck, and some from behavior that results from sudden close proximity with other bulls after years of open space: they batted one another with their horns and tried to mount one another, in some sort of sexual desperation or confusion. A big brindle somehow managed to climb over the pen wall and escape. He frantically ran the quarter mile to his night pasture, and stood there dumbly, thinking he was safe. Horseless cowboys, mounted on three-wheel all-terrain vehicles, herded the fugitive back to his pen.

Unlike horses, bulls do not often make cowboys feel sentimental. In rodeo, however, there are a few exceptions—the rare bulls

who put on such a good show that even after they've stopped bucking they are allowed to live. The most famous of these was one called Tornado, a Brahman-Hereford cross, who is now interred at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, in Oklahoma City, right alongside the great bucking broncs—Hells Angels, Midnight, and Five Minutes to Midnight—with a grave marker that describes him as "red with a white face . . . bucking, jumping and spinning, clown- and barrel-fighting [but] not a killer bull." Tornado was owned by the legendary rodeo star Jim Shoulders: he'd come across Tornado on the way to the slaughterhouse at El Campo, Texas (the bull had flunked a fertility test), and soon realized that this bull was one in a million. Tornado bucked off more than two hundred and twenty men before finally being ridden by Freckles Brown, in the National Finals, in Oklahoma City in 1967—the most famous bull ride ever. When Tornado's great bucking career came to an end, in 1969, Shoulders felt that the bull had earned some peace, and so put him out to pasture at his ranch, in Henryetta, Oklahoma. Tornado

finally succumbed to what veterinarians thought to be hardware disease—a nail or a piece of wire, eaten with the feed, that lodged in one of his stomachs. “He went pretty good,” Shoulters said. “Died with his toes up.”

THE rodeo took shape as the frontier vanished, and it is now revered by its participants and viewers as a bastion of frontier values. For many towns in the West, the Midlands, and the Great Plains, the arrival of the rodeo is the premier cultural event of the year, and provides an occasion to celebrate cowboy ways. Every July since the Frontier Days celebration began, in 1897, Cheyenne has gone cowboy crazy. The windows of most stores are soap-painted with images of bucking horses and their bowlegged riders and are splashed with slogans like “Howdy, Pardner!” and “Yippie Ki Yea!” Truck stops on the outskirts of town sell buckskin chaps and vests in children’s sizes; Western-wear stores (open late each night) are crowded with tourists, including some buckaroos from Japan and some from Europe, who may speak no English but try on ten-gallon hats and stagger around in newly purchased high-heeled cowboy boots. Local restaurants push buffalo burgers and deep-fried bulls’ testicles, and twice daily mock gunfights, featuring local businessmen dressed like Billy the Kid and Butch and Sundance, are held in the town square. For rodeo cognoscenti, there are two places to be: the ready area at Frontier Park, adjacent to the bull chutes, during the day; and the bar at the Hitching Post Best Western motel at night.

The ready area is a wire-fenced locker room under the bleachers of the rodeo arena. It is open only to cowboys and the press, and to get inside you need more than credentials; you must pass the flinty-eyed inspection of guards who scrutinize your clothing with a hauteur worthy of Diana Vreeland. Signs outside specify what you must wear: hat, boots, Western-style pants, a long-sleeved shirt fastened at the cuffs. No T-shirts, no shorts, and no hats other than the cowboy kind. One journalist wearing street shoes is expelled forthwith; another, with rolled-up sleeves, is ordered to unfurl them and button them; and a man who removes his hat to mop

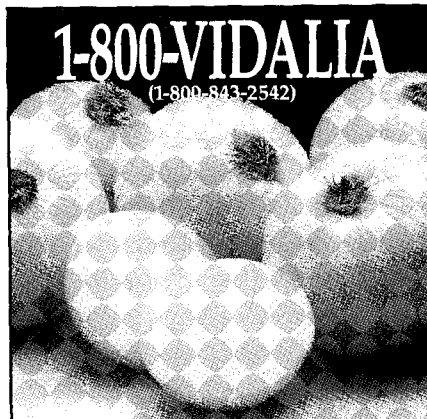
his brow is instructed to put it right back on.

In the ready area, nearly everyone knows everyone else. The cowboys have met one another at rodeos all year long, and many are travelling as partners. The members of the press who cover them regularly are also familiar; and although they carry cameras and notepads instead of bull ropes, most of them appear to be part of the scene rather than observers. Following the rodeo, even as an outsider, can be a seductive experience. A photographer who was originally from back East confided that she had recently left her husband and taken her two kids out of prep school to travel the circuit on a regular basis, living out of the back of her van, just as many of the cowboys do. “I’ve crossed over,” she said. “This is it for me. I’m looking at land in Wyoming or Montana. I can never go back.” A reporter from New York, a thin, sallow man, said that he hoped someday to write a book about bull riders. A young woman who came to Cheyenne from Vermont said that she used to take rodeo photographs as research for Western-theme paintings but now she just likes to hang around the ready area, snapping away with her Nikon. “When I go home, I invite my girlfriends over for a cowboy slide show, and we all just shriek,” she said.

The attention neither bothers nor flatters the cowboys; they are busy getting ready for their rides. Some sit on low benches with their pants down around their ankles, taping their knees with adhesive or strapping on whatever trusses, braces, and supports are necessary to keep them in one piece or to keep the already broken parts together. Others, dressed in the tightest possible bluejeans, tapered shirts that allow no wrinkles, elaborate custom leather chaps and spurs,

do warmup exercises that include sensuous pliés, bends, and low stretches, interspersing the slow drill with violent kick-boxing steps that hint at the power and speed it takes to keep up with a bucking bull.

A handful of cowboys form a prayer group. They bow their heads, and an older man leads them in a short benediction. One of them holds a copy of “The Cowboy Bible,” a standard-issue New Testament with a picture of a bucking horse and rider on its



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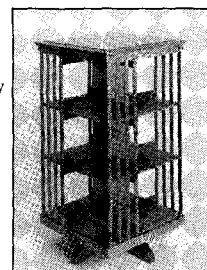
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cover. Cody Custer, ranked among the nation's top ten bull riders, is one of the sport's most religious participants: he wears a pair of chaps that bear the inscription "Jesus is Lord" on each leather flap.

As the time to ride bulls approaches, the ready area gets tense. There is little talk now, but a lot of noise: brusque "Howdy"s, backslaps, eruptions of laughter. Men stuff plugs of tobacco into their lower lips or their cheeks and begin to spit tobacco juice in short brown spurts. A calm-before-the-storm hush sweeps through the ready area as the bulls are driven from their corrals into the chutes. The chutes, once white, are marked by scuffs, blood streaks, and excrement stains from the countless animals that have been pressed inside them waiting to buck. The variety of bulls loaded for the first go-round of the day is amazing. Some have wide, pointed horns that curve upward; others have downturned ones, which hug their heads like a Chanel bob; some, called "mulies," have no horns at all, either because they were born that way or because their horns have been removed. Many of the bulls look to be pure Brahman: gray, hump-backed, prehistoric, and angry. There are also Herefords and Anguses and their Brahman crossbreeds, Braford and Brangus: patched or mottled or spotted in white, red, brown, gray, black.

Before they actually strap their rigging on a bull, some cowboys climb to the top of the chute to survey what they have drawn. A peculiar détente can be observed as a man sits above, dangling his legs into the pen and using the bull's bulk as a handy hassock. One may reach down and stroke the hump; another will whisper words of encouragement into a scarred ear. "Buck, you monster," one cowboy says, while at an adjacent chute a man standing on the ground looks straight at his bull through the bars, and the bull looks straight back.

Bull riding happens shockingly fast: the chute opens, the bull bucks, the man stays on or does not, and the crack of a gun signals the end of the test. Once the rides start in a go-round, there is almost no delay between them, and reputations can be made as fast as the chute doors open. This July, Lynn Uptmor, who had only a month before

decided to give up his job in West, Texas, where he drove a fertilizer truck for a lawn-service company, scored the highest bull ride in the history of Cheyenne: ninety-four points, on Burns Rodeo Company's Copenhagen High Five. Tuff Hedeman, last year's champion and the sport's reigning glamour boy, scored a disappointing seventy on a bull that, he told reporters, "felt like somebody shot him between the eyes."

As each bull charges from its chute, the people in the audience are strangely quiet, as if they were witnessing a spectacle so odd they don't know how to react. About three seconds into the ride, if the cowboy is still holding on and in control a low clamor rises from the stands, and by seven seconds the clamor has grown to a resounding roar. When things go wrong, the collective gasp of the crowd is impassioned. The thing that most often goes wrong—not counting a cowboy's simply getting bucked off, which always happens—is his getting his hand stuck in the rigging. Until he manages to wrench himself free, or until the arena clowns (the most fearless rodeo cowboys of all) jump on the bull and yank his hand loose, he remains attached to the animal's back, sometimes dragged underneath, sometimes slung from side to side like a rag doll in a spin cycle. It is said that the best thing that can happen to a cowboy when he gets seriously hung up is to lose consciousness.

When all goes right, eight seconds on a rank bull can electrify not only an audience but the cowboy himself. In a great ride, a bull rider doesn't

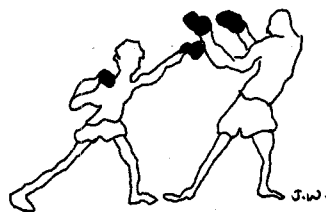
just handle the bull's strength but uses it to push the ride even harder. "Throw power back at him just as much as he throws it up at you," Gary Leffew tells his students. "Ride his

strength and make it your own." The admiration of the fans, the thrill of being a sex symbol and a piece of American folklore, is all well and good, but it's the ecstasy of having your rope strapped around a piece of brute animal energy, with your chest out and your head high and your teeth gritted, and seizing all that energy for yourself, that makes a cowboy's eyes light up.

You can feel the afterglow at the bar of the Hitching Post Best Western. Every rodeo town has a place like this, where cowboys go for fun after the

day's events are over. The Hitching Post is an ordinary-looking motel saloon, but its barstools and small tables are crowded with men who either look euphoric at having won their event or are doing a good job of forgetting they didn't win it. One evening during the rodeo, Larry King is on TV interviewing the Iraqi Ambassador to the United Nations, but no one is paying any attention, and anyway Patsy Cline's "Crazy," coming from the jukebox, drowns him out. Every man in this bar is dressed like every other, in clean jeans, pressed long-sleeve Western shirt, boots, and hat, and nearly every one has his cardboard contestant number folded in his back pocket and sticking out just far enough to make it clear that he is the real McCoy, and not a dude pretending to be a cowboy. These men are clean-shaven, short-haired, and well muscled; their faces are ruddy and even-featured, and some are marked with battle scars from the arena. It would be hard to find a more homogeneous group outside a family. The cowboys make up about three-fourths of the Hitching Post bar clientele. Most of the rest of the customers are known as buckle bunnies: pretty young women who tend to size up potential dates by the significance of the championship buckle they wear. Like the cowboys, the buckle bunnies hold fast to a distinct style. They are lean, with big tumbles of blond hair and jingling earrings shaped like cactuses, boots, or some other characteristically Western object; they wear tight black jeans and halter tops that reveal a ring of flawless young skin above the waistband. The guys drink beer, from the can; most of the women have mixed drinks, served in plastic cups.

Gary Leffew comes to the Hitching Post just about every night when he is in Cheyenne. He has been hired by the rodeo to ride out on a horse at the beginning of each day to explain the rules of bull riding to the folks in the grandstands. From his mount, he shows how spurring works and explains how judges score rides. For this job he wears a matching outfit of ketchup-colored chaps and vest, highlighted with silver leather and the name and logo of his corporate sponsor, Bull's-Eye barbecue sauce. One evening, after a supper meeting with the Bull's-Eye executives, he takes a table at the Hitching Post and holds court. The chairs around him fill up fast with friends



and admirers, and throughout the night cowboys drift over and pay their respects to the man who won the world.

That night, one of the people at Leffew's table is Randy Queen, a young cowboy from Oklahoma City who has been ranked among the top three riders in the Prairie Circuit, which is Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska. Earlier in the day, Queen had completed his eight-second ride but had the misfortune to wind up in the dust underneath a very large bull—an accident so dramatic that a photograph of it made the front page of the next day's *Wyoming Tribune-Eagle*, captioned "Survival of the Fittest." But, amazingly, he has only a slight crust of blood on one nostril to show for it. He tells Leffew how much he admires his philosophy, and says that he has bought "Unlimited Power," by Anthony Robbins, to help him eliminate his negative thinking vis-à-vis bulls. Leffew invites Queen to attend his school, gratis, because he believes he might be able to give him some useful pointers. Good as Queen is and hard as he tries, he hasn't yet broken into the top-money ranks nationally, even though he has been driving to at least three rodeos a week for the last several years and has earned ten thousand dollars so far in 1992.

As he and Leffew analyze the day's rides, Queen glances curiously at a woman who appears to be Leffew's date. She is no buckle bunny; she is in her early forties and is conservatively dressed. Queen seems a little perplexed by her proximity to his hero, and after a few beers he leans over and asks her how she happens to be here tonight with Mr. Leffew. "Because I've been married to him for twenty-five years," the woman, whose name is Sandie Leffew, replies.

Suddenly, Queen seems younger and more bruised, and a lot more rootless, than he seemed when he first sat down. Gary Leffew—with his wife, his corporate backing, his face in TV ads, and his name in the record books—is on the other side of rodeo life from him. Leffew is what so many cowboys like Queen dream of becoming: a champion who can afford a four-hundred-dollar hat that won't wind up covered with bull crap and arena dust at the end of the day.

Like many other rodeo contestants, Queen will be sleeping in the back of his car tonight, unwilling to pay for a motel—the sensible thing to do, he

says, considering that he is coming away from Cheyenne with nothing. When there is no one left to talk to at the Hitching Post, he goes back to his car at the Cowboy Campground, a parking lot adjacent to the arena, where many riders live for the duration of the rodeo. Like a wagon train circled around for the night, the vehicles are pulled close together; trunk lids are agape, tailgates are lowered, some cowboys are asleep on blankets spread on the ground, and nearly every vehicle contains people lying in a cluttered, liniment-scented nest of laundry, rope, and tack. Queen intends to get away from Cheyenne without delay and drive south through the night, but he lies down in his back seat, falls asleep, and doesn't wake until dawn. No matter: he has time enough to get down the road to the Roundup Rodeo, in Dodge City, Kansas, where he will have another chance to score high. Going on down the road is what it's all about; the rankest bulls are almost sure to be just over the next state line.

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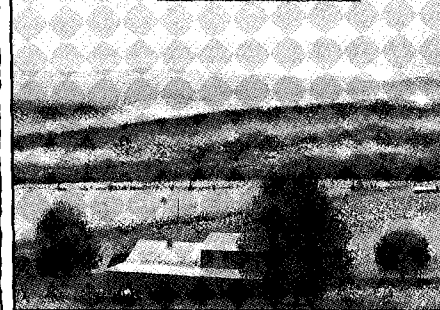
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BOOKS

A Mild-Mannered Reporter

AROUND the turn of the century, if you could read English you couldn't escape Richard Harding Davis. He was a star journalist (he covered every big story, from the Johnstown flood to the First World War), and his articles were collected in books. So were his short stories. He was a best-selling novelist and a hit playwright. (Several of his plays were adapted from his fiction.) And he was a pinup boy. After he posed for a *Life* cover by Charles Dana Gibson, in 1890, his handsome face became as familiar as his byline.

Davis's life was all highlights. Here is a vignette from Arthur Lubow's lively new biography, "The Reporter Who Would Be King" (Scribners; \$25): In early 1904, Davis sees his new play, "The Dictator," triumph at its New Haven opening, and leaves the theatre at one-thirty in the morning. While he is helping a fallen horse, his childhood playmate and lifelong friend Ethel Barrymore, riding by in an automobile, spots him and takes him out to supper to celebrate. She is doubly elated because her kid brother Jack has scored a success in her old friend's play. By the time "The Dictator" opens in New York, a couple of months later (another triumph), Davis is in Tokyo to report the Russo-Japanese War for *Collier's*. Lubow's intelligent, readable book explores the reasons that within a decade of his death (he was born in 1864 and died in 1916) Davis was all but forgotten—or, worse, remembered with a sneer. But Lubow also persuades us that, despite his eclipse, he still matters: Davis expressed the aspirations and limitations of his time, and gives us a picture of Americans in the era when the United States became a world power. Then, too, Davis's combination of accomplishment and flamboyance, along with the ubiquity and transience of his renown, practically defines celebrity. (In 1898, the American novelist Winston Churchill caricatured him in a not very good novel, "The Celebrity." It only increased Davis's celebrity.) Like every celebrity, Davis was a role model. The personality he projected shaped the daydreams and the careers of several generations of

American writers, from his friend and colleague Stephen Crane on to Frank Norris, John Reed, Theodore Dreiser, H. L. Mencken, Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway, and Vincent Sheean.

A rough outline of Davis's life would fit lots of writers: he had two unsatisfactory marriages, and spent money faster than he earned it. At one point, as Davis decides to buy an eye-popping spread in Westchester County, Lubow asks, rhetorically, "Why do writers so often mortgage their futures to country estates?" and answers that such extravagant places "created a fantasy setting in which the writer could refashion his own image." Davis, like Jay Gatsby (or Madonna), was a fantasy person. His childhood, though, presents no obvious source for his need to masquerade. He was born in Philadelphia, the adored oldest child (he had a younger brother and sister) of an able, loving, respected, and respectable couple. His father, Clarke Davis, was a lawyer who switched to journalism and became the editor of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, and his mother, Rebecca Harding Davis, was a well-known writer. Her first published story, "Life in the Iron Mills," appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1861. In "The Richard Harding Davis Years: A Biography of a Mother and Son" (1961) Gerald Langford called the story "one of the revolutionary documents in American writing," noting that its realistic account of a factory town antedates Zola's first novel by six years. Rebecca Davis subsequently turned to commercial fiction for mass-market magazines, which paid more than the literary *Atlantic*, partly to help with the household bills, and partly—to please her husband. Clarke Davis was a moralist and crusader and despised writers who "with their pleas of truth

and realism find . . . excuses for describing vice or . . . debasement." The biographers think that he deflected his wife from her original literary goal: "to dig into this commonplace, this vulgar American life, and see what it is." In later years, Rebecca Davis warned her son against following her example and writing for money, but his spendthrift habits prevented him from taking her advice. Mother and son were very close, but neither Lubow nor Langford blames her for his literary shortcomings—possibly because she seems to have been a first-rate person, though not a first-rate writer.

If the elder Davises had a flaw as parents, it may have been the uncritical love they gave their son. It looks as if the constant attention they bestowed on young Richard only whetted his appetite for more. He was determined to stand out, and by the time he arrived at Lehigh University he had developed a mid-Atlantic accent and matching affectations designed to suggest that he was English or rich, or both. Some of the attention he received, then and later, was unfriendly, but most people who knew Davis liked him. I think Lubow's readers will, too. The biographer uses his documentation deftly and thoughtfully: we feel we know Davis intimately, from the bright little boy showing off, to the middle-aged man exhausted by overwork and worried about bills. Lubow doesn't conceal or excuse Davis's foolishnesses, but as he unfolds the life the faults seem superficial. Despite his pretensions, Davis wasn't a real phony. He extolled courage and gallantry, and he was brave and chivalrous. One example: Lubow tells us that after Harry Thaw shot Stanford White, in 1906, the yellow press began printing lurid allegations by chorus girls that they, like Thaw's wife, Evelyn Nesbit, had been seduced by the dead man—who until the moment he was murdered had been admired as an architect and a leader of society. With one exception, White's friends, afraid of being found rakes by association, said nothing. The exception was Davis: he published a memorial in *Collier's* defending White as he had known him—a gesture worthy of a Davis hero, which



displeased Davis's moralistic readers.

Davis always intended to write serious fiction—literature, *art*—and Lubow points out that one important way Davis influenced younger literary aspirants was by starting as a newspaperman. Journalism—especially in those days, before journalists specialized—offered middle-class young men a range of experience they could get no other way. Yet what makes a novelist persuasive, I think, isn't what he reports but his unique voice, and Davis's fictional voice doesn't carry. His novels include action-adventure romances, like "Soldiers of Fortune," which sets American characters against a Latin-American background, and society romances, like "The Princess Aline," in which American characters tour the eastern Mediterranean. They're standard commercial fare—attractive heroes and heroines find their way to a predictable happy ending. Many of Davis's short stories use the same kind of urban material as O. Henry's, but, by comparison, they lack bite. Lubow comments that Davis's "deepest instinct was to please." He pleased by omitting everything that disturbed the turn-of-the-century Americans. Lubow writes:

At the same time that the nation was glorifying youth and energy, it was gripped with anxiety about depletion and loss. . . . Americans mourned the closing of the frontier and the death of the mythical West. . . . The era of the Gibson Girl, the bicycle, and the American Beauty rose was also the time of the economic depression that began in 1893 and set off a series of convulsions: Populist agitation in the farmlands, violent labor disputes like the Pullman and Homestead strikes in the cities. . . . Morals were falling down, nerves were wearing thin, natural resources were running out. Very sensitive to these concerns, Davis expressed them by negating and denying them.

Another subject that Davis dealt with by omission was Americans' distrust of their leaders. Lubow says:

In all of Davis's fiction, not one hero is a businessman or a politician. For Davis, as for many idealistic Americans, these professions were tainted; and although he admired some individual politicians and businessmen, he preferred, when creating an alter ego, to conjure up an artist, an explorer, a soldier—or an engineer.

Lubow thinks that Davis's evasions vitiate his fiction, and notes that the generation immediately after his ridiculed his "allegiance to an outdated code" that demanded chastity of heroes and heroines. In post-First World War America, he seemed prewar, and in an era of disillusion his ideals seemed



"Put the cat out and come to bed!"

illusory. Some critics—Mencken, for instance—were embarrassed by their boyhood idolatry of Davis, but their animus goes too far. The real problem with Davis's fiction—the reason he disappointed *this* reader—is that his imagination doesn't reach far enough. One of his best-loved characters, the star of any number of short stories and short-story collections, was Cortlandt Van Bibber, a New York society bachelor of no profession and ample means. He was a more artful version of a character that Davis had invented for his college magazine—an upper-crust naïf who stumbled in and out of misadventures. As Davis developed him, the character grew kindly, sentimental, and adroit. Van Bibber became a problem-solver—Bertie Wooster becoming his own Jeeves—with the result that the Van Bibber stories are, at best, mildly playful, not comic.

Davis wasn't a bad writer, just a good writer who mistook his gifts. He was a brilliant journalist, and his journalism remains fresh even though it has become history. He always knew what to tell his readers, and he never lost his curiosity, his energy, or his resourcefulness. Obstacles only increased his enterprise. At the outbreak of war in 1914, for instance, stuffy British bureaucrats denied him press credentials, so he crossed the Channel as a private citizen of a neutral country, and covered the German conquest of Belgium; the Germans found him, and came very close to shooting him as a spy. That experience was no deterrent: Davis went on to France, where the same freewheeling approach yielded another fistful of good stories before the French arrested him. Lubow mentions that Davis's account of the German Army marching through Brussels was frequently anthologized, and

I can see why. He describes something that Americans had never seen—an immense, efficient army operating with mechanical precision. Though we know, as Davis didn't, that that irresistible force was marching to stalemate, not victory, and that between 1939 and 1945 other seemingly endless, apparently irresistible columns of Germans in field-gray uniforms would terrify still more European cities before they were defeated, Davis's story still conveys the shock of the new. We not only see what he saw but feel what he and his readers felt: that the German invasion of Belgium shattered a secure agreement about the conduct of civilized nations.

As most people know, Davis's splendid combat reports from the Spanish-American War transformed Theodore Roosevelt into a national hero, and so were at least partly responsible for his nomination as McKinley's Vice-President. Davis had visited Cuba earlier, before we went to war, to report on the island's rebellion against Spanish rule. He discovered a scenario that we now know practically by heart: the Spanish were holding the cities, but couldn't control the countryside, although they were trying everything—even building a fortified line in the jungle. Here again the immediacy of Davis's reporting makes our overfamiliarity with this sad set of circumstances irrelevant. We read of the devastation and inhumanity of rebellion and civil war just as his readers did—as if these horrors were extraordinary. When disciplined by reality or fact, Davis was first-rate.

Davis's career flowered in an era when great fortunes were made in publishing. Lubow explains that the introduction of high-speed presses after the Civil War, followed by other technological innovations, such as the Mergenthaler Linotype machine, made printing mass-circulation periodicals physically possible. With the support of advertising, many became hugely profitable. Publishers competed by paying name writers unheard-of sums. The payments themselves made news, as when, in 1895, William Randolph Hearst paid Davis an astonishing five hundred dollars to cover the Thanksgiving Day football game between Yale and Princeton. (Football was already an American obsession, though it was still considered a swanky sport, confined to an elite minority who were

rich enough to go to college.) Print had no competition during Davis's lifetime, but in 1914 his own "Soldiers of Fortune," published in 1897 and dramatized in 1902, became one of the first feature-length films.

Lubow tells us that when Davis died, of a heart attack, his debts were greater than his bank account, but that over time movie sales of more of his novels provided a comfortable support for his widow and daughter. Davis's work could migrate from one medium to another over the years because his stereotypes embodied fantasies that remain mass-market staples. His fiction isn't art (it isn't even entertainment anymore), but it is a catalogue of our still cherished unrealisms. I couldn't help noticing, for example, that Robert Clay, the hero of "Soldiers of Fortune" (he is as omniscient and invulnerable as Indiana Jones), an engineer who has built roads, railroads, and bridges, and in the course of the novel is operating a mine, says that he never went to college. Since the only mining engineer of the period I'd heard of is Herbert Hoover, a Stanford graduate, Clay's lack of formal education seemed one of the many implausibilities in the novel. But this past year, with Ross Perot attracting hundreds of thousands of signatures, Robert Clay's boast reminds us of a deep-seated American will to believe that qualifications don't matter. Another lasting Davis stereotype is the skinny heroine. Though we commonly credit the nineteen-twenties with slimming women, Davis was the first to put into words what Charles Dana Gibson had drawn—athletic leading ladies, at least twenty pounds lighter than any other woman on the premises.

Lubow feels that Davis makes us recognize how remote we are from the America of a century ago, but I'm amazed—appalled, really—by how little has changed. As with Davis's commercial-fiction daydreams, the stories are

the same, though the trimmings are different. We're still entangled with our neighbors to the south, with the same doubtful results. Davis covered the Boer War; the Boers are still making trouble. He covered wars in the Balkans. Before Davis went to Japan, he admired its courteous people; after he experienced their prevarication with foreigners—especially foreign correspondents—he was disenchanted. Lubow's list of American anxieties of a century ago—the anxieties that Davis's fiction evaded—describes our present concerns. After apprenticing on Philadelphia newspapers, Davis came to New York City as a reporter for the *Evening Sun*. (Most of his working life he was a free lance.) If you want to see how little progress we've made, consider two of Davis's New York stories that Lubow tells us about. In 1889, William Kemmler, a convicted murderer, became the first New Yorker sentenced to die by electrocution. (A three-man commission had spent three years determining that that was the most humane method of killing someone.) Kemmler's execution was delayed, however, first by a dispute over alternating versus direct current, then by his lawyers, who appealed through state and federal courts, and, finally, because the machinery was defective. By the time Kemmler was executed, at the state penitentiary in Auburn in 1890, Davis had gone back to New York City to work on another story: the detection, arrest, trial, and conviction for manslaughter of a physician who had attempted to conceal the body of a young unmarried woman who had died during an abortion.

Toward the close of the book, Lubow quotes Van Wyck Brooks discussing Davis's influence on American letters: Brooks ascribes it to his personality rather than his work. He was a mixture of worldliness and innocence, fundamentally ingenuous—without calculation—but no dope. He mastered (or invented) every trick of the reporter's trade. He was ambitious and self-centered but never ungenerous. He plugged other reporters when he felt they deserved it and admitted without resentment that Stephen Crane was a better novelist. Davis more than suspected—he knew—that his fiction, though remunerative, wasn't artistically successful, but he took that disappointment as he took others: he



squared his shoulders and didn't whine. His optimism was only partly due to his predilection for the smiling aspects of life; it also derived from a journalist's temperament, a faith that the world is a fascinating place. As a human being, Davis was much better than his fiction; he was as good as his journalism. His combination of boyishness and manliness, of silliness and talent, can be irritating; more often it's beguiling. Lubow's work is impressive in every way, but his most impressive achievement is getting Davis's charm on paper. Charm is always impalpable, and it's highly perishable when the charmer has vanished. You don't find Davis's charm on every page of Davis, but you find it everywhere in Lubow.

—NAOMI BLIVEN

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE JOURNEY, by Ida Fink, translated from the Polish by Joanna Weschler and Francine Prose (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; \$20). This fine novel, presented as a memoir, tells the story of two sisters who escape from a Jewish ghetto in Poland in 1942. Their false identity papers prove insufficient almost at once, and the young women survive only by changing names and places repeatedly, relying on their wits and a few crucial props: the flowered scarf worn by all peasant girls in Poland, the elegant gloves to hide work-callused hands in Bonn. Some of their identities are excruciatingly rehearsed (Christmas carols must be sung, catechisms recited on demand), while other performances are improvised under pressure, as when the older sister finds herself acting the part of an outraged Polish worker, screaming obscenities at members of the Gestapo. But most terrifying are the unguarded moments when, glancing at each other or meeting the eyes of a hostile stranger, the sisters catch glimpses of their true selves. This is a harrowing odyssey—it has the quality of a foxhunt seen through the eyes of the fox. Yet the honesty of this tale and the art of its telling make the novel seem like a gift, and the reader is honored to witness the small miracle of its final sentence.

HORTENSE IN EXILE, by Jacques Roubaud, translated from the French by Dominic Di Bernardi (Dalkey Ar-

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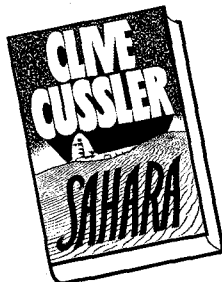
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chive; \$19.95). This is the rare book for lovers of conundrums, paradox, narrative punning, and cats. When the beautiful and sexy Hortense is abducted from the palace of her fiancé, the Premier Prince Presumptive of Poldevia, her friends in a more ordinary part of the world condemn her for her "bimbotude" but go to her rescue anyway. Her abductor, a rival prince named Augre, satisfies his lust on a statue-come-to-life that he has made, and which the author dubs WHortense. A cat named Ophelia (who is considerably more intelligent than the human heroine) sets to work on what is "rotten in the Principalities of Poldevia," which turns out to be, as far as Hortense is concerned, nearly everything. As it happens, that makes for happy endings all around. Among games with nominalism and logical puzzles, this intellectual confection manages to reduce politics to its proper proportions (as a matter of disputes over definitions), and to be, at the same time, splendidly silly.

GENERAL

KISSINGER: A BIOGRAPHY, by Walter Isaacson (Simon & Schuster; \$30). There's no doubt that Henry Kissinger was an important figure—Nixon's national-security adviser, Nixon's and then Ford's Secretary of State. Among his other successes, he negotiated America's exit from Vietnam and the resumption of diplomatic relations with China. But there's also little doubt that he was a vain, ambitious, backbiting intriguer, who alternated tantrums and sycophancy, and who overestimated his own intelligence and underrated other people's. Mr. Isaacson's work is a model of insight, delicacy, and fairness that moves at a lively pace through recent American history and re-creates, in considerable depth, the intellectuals and politicians who formed its foreign policy. He charitably attributes Kissinger's behavior to an immigrant's insecurities, and judges his most serious failing to be his inability to understand American democracy: he couldn't foresee that secret diplomacy, precluding discussion (and persuasion), would inevitably provoke suspicion and dissent.

NOTE: "Up in the Old Hotel," by Joseph Mitchell, has been published by

Pantheon (\$27.50). All the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

VERSE

THE MAN WITH NIGHT SWEATS, by Thom Gunn (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; \$15). The tension of Gunn's famous earlier poems, which adventurously drew on classical themes (Achilles and Patroclus), pop icons (Presley and Brando), and existential extremes, has, in his first new collection in ten years, become muted and commemorative. The controlling metaphor is the imperilled human body, the drama surrounding it is the "recruiting armies" of "the plague," or AIDS, the backdrop is San Francisco, and the astonished players are "friends who died before their time" or those for whom time is running out. Gunn moves with a colloquial ease and a kind of epigrammatic grace through a variety of quatrains, completed monologues, Skeltonic variations, and occasional free verse. The emotion is level in tone, imbued with a courtly sorrow or a doleful nonchalance as Gunn unflinchingly acknowledges, amid the "pills, shot, X-ray," the end of the "ardent life" of lovers no longer innocently "falling asleep to the small talk of the rain."

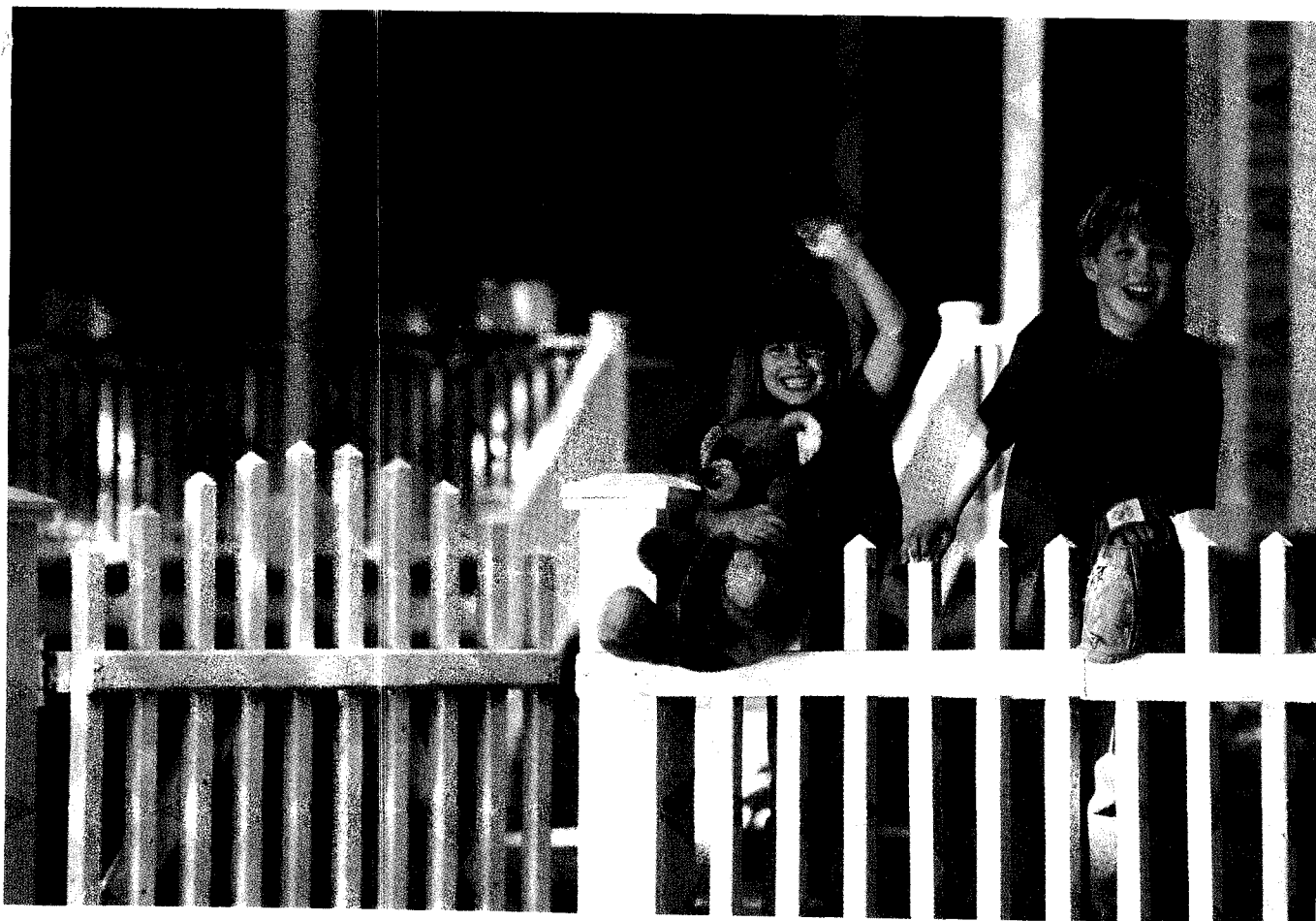
DAYS GOING/DAYS COMING BACK, by Eleanor Ross Taylor (University of Utah; \$7.95, paper). Mrs. Taylor is preëminently a poet of nostalgia. Her milieu is the puritan South, both the community of yesteryear and the "bourgeois rot" of the present day. Many of her poems have a testamentary air; they travel swiftly and grandly through myriad details, high or low, from the christening to the cemetery. The voice here is by turns stoical, fretful, tartly poignant, and wryly sardonic—a voice that knows those places where "suffering's homemade, sure to fit." Mrs. Taylor has a wondrous eye and a roomy exuberance, yet the net effect is of the stubbornly thought out, the exactly weighted, a pictorial and psychological rightness of tone and shape.

THE MARKETS

Stocks turned downward after an earlier rally. Bonds rose sharply. The dollar fell. God prices rose.—*Fresno (Calif.) Bee*.

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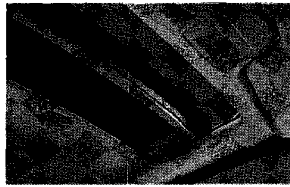
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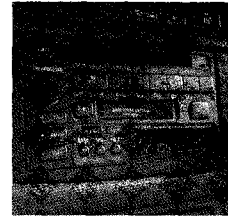
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